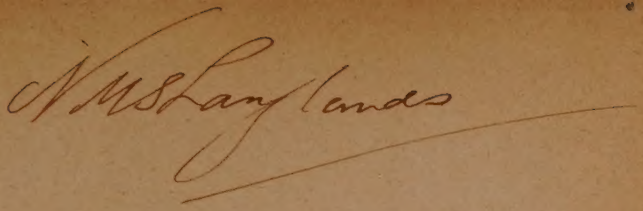

£3.99
3516

LIFE AND LABOUR

FIRST EDITION . . . *November* 1887
Reprinted . . . . . *February* 1896
SECOND EDITION (3/6) . . *January* 1898
Reprinted . . . . . *July* 1902
Reprinted . . . . . *October* 1907
THIRD EDITION (1/-) . . *September* 1910
Reprinted . . . . . *January* 1912

LIFE AND LABOUR

OR CHARACTERISTICS OF MEN OF INDUSTRY, CULTURE AND GENIUS

BY SAMUEL SMILES, LL.D.

AUTHOR OF "SELF-HELP," ETC.

'Labor omnia vincit.'—VIRGIL.

'Biography is by nature the most universally profitable, universally pleasant, of all things; especially biography of distinguished individuals.'—CARLYLE.

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET
1912

PREFACE

THE following work has been written on the lines of "Self-Help" and "Character," and contains many fresh instances of what can be accomplished by honest force of will and steady perseverance.

The preparation of the book has formed the pleasant occupation of many spare hours; but while the early chapters were written many years ago, the later ones were added, and the whole work has been carefully revised, and in great part rewritten, since the beginning of the present year.

The chapters on Over Brain-work and the Conditions of Health may be of use to those who work their Brains too much and their Physical System too little. This part of the work has been to a certain extent the result of personal experience.

It has been objected by some who have read the proofs that certain names have been too much repeated and re-introduced, though under different subjects and in different chapters. But this has been found to some extent necessary in order to force home the lessons which they are intended to teach. The author trusts that the work will, nevertheless, be read with interest and benefit.

S. S.

LONDON, *November* 1887.

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LIFE AND LABOUR

CHAPTER I

THE MAN AND GENTLEMAN

The first stocke was full of rightwisness,
Trewe of his worde, sober, piteous, and free,
Clene of his goste, and loved his besinesse,
Against the vice of slouth, in honeste,
And but his eyre love vertue as did he;
He is not Gentil though he riche seme
Al were he miter, crowne, or diademe.—CHAUCER.

Sow an act, and you reap a habit;
Sow a habit, and you reap a character;
Sow a character, and you reap a destiny.—?

Come wealth or want, come good or ill:
Let young and old accept their part,
And bow before the Awful Will,
And bear it with an honest heart.
Who misses or who wins the prize—
Go, lose or conquer as you can,
But if you fail, or if you rise,
Be each, pray God, a gentleman.—THACKERAY.

THE life of man in this world is, for the most part, a life of work. In the case of ordinary men, work may be regarded as their normal condition. Every man worth calling a man should be willing and able to work. The honest labouring man finds work necessary for his sustenance; but it is equally necessary for men of all conditions, and in every relationship of life.

How can one be idle when others are busy; how maintain social respect, honour, and responsibility? Work is the best of all educators; for it forces men into contact with others, and with things as they really are. If we consult biography, it will be found that the worthiest men have been the most industrious in their callings, the most sedulous in their investigations, the most heroical in their undertakings. Indeed, to work of hand and brain the world is mainly indebted for its intelligence, its learning, its advancement, and its civilisation.

Labour is indeed the price set upon everything which is valuable. Nothing can be accomplished without it. The greatest of men have risen to distinction by unwearied industry and patient application. They may have inborn genius, their natures may be quick and agile, but they cannot avoid the penalty of persevering labour. Labour, however, is not a penalty; work, with hope, is a pleasure. "There is nothing so laborious," said St. Augustine, "as *not* to labour. Blessed is he who devotes his life to great and noble ends, and who forms his well-considered plans with deliberate wisdom." It is not, however, in the noblest plans of life, but in the humblest, that labour avails most. Idleness wastes a fortune in half the time that industry makes one. "Fortune," says the Sanskrit proverb, "attendeth that Lion amongst men who exerteth himself: they are weak men who declare Fate to be the sole cause."

An indulgence in *dolce far niênte* causes about half of the hindrances of life. Laziness is said to be one of the greatest dangers that besets the youth of this country. Some young men shirk work, or anything that requires effort or labour. Few people can entertain the idea that they are of no use in the world; or that they are ruining themselves by their laziness. Yet the lazy person who does no work

loses the power of enjoyment. His life is all holiday, and he has no interval of leisure for relaxation. The lie-a-beds have never done anything in the world. Events sweep past and leave them slumbering and helpless. "What is often called indolence," says Crabb Robinson, "is, in fact, the unconscious consciousness of incapacity."

"Idleness," says Jeremy Taylor, "is the burial of a living man,—an idle person being so useless to any purposes of God and man, that he is like one that is dead, unconcerned in the changes and necessities of the world; and he only lives to spend his time, and eat the fruits of the earth, like a vermin or a wolf. When their time comes, they die and perish, and in the meantime do no good; they neither plough nor carry burthens; all that they do is either unprofitable or mischievous. Idleness, indeed, is the greatest prodigality in the world."

The old Greeks insisted on the necessity of labour as a social end. Solon said, "He who does not work is handed over to the tribunals." Another said, "He that does not work is a robber." Labour is one of the best antidotes to crime. As the old proverb has it, "An idle brain is the devil's workshop," for by doing nothing we learn to do ill. The man who does not work, and thinks himself above it, is to be pitied as well as condemned. Nothing can be more terrible than active ignorance and indulged luxury. Self-indulgence saps the foundation of morals, destroys the vigour of manhood, and breeds distempers that nothing but death can eradicate.

Those who know most know best that the devil usually presents himself in the guise of an angel of light, and that sin, in its most seductive forms, arrays itself in the garb of pleasure. The Turkish proverb says, "The devil tempts the idle man, but the idle man tempts the devil." He who

follows the devil's lurid light will find before long that ruin follows close upon self-indulgence, and that sorrow becomes only the ghost of joy. Madox Brown, the painter and poet, has illustrated the value and beneficence of labour in the following rugged but effective sonnet:—

"Work! which beads the brow, and tans the flesh
Of lusty manhood, casting out its devils!
By whose weird art, transmuting poor men's evils,
Their bed seems down, their one dish ever fresh.
Ah me! For lack of it what ills in leash
Hold us. Its want the pale mechanic levels
To workhouse depths, while Master Spendthrift revels.
For want of work, the fiends him soon inmesh!
Ah! beauteous tripping dame with bell-like skirts,
Intent on thy small scarlet-coated hound,
Are ragged wayside babes not lovesome too?
Untrained, their state reflects on thy deserts,
Or they grow noisome beggars to abound,
Or dreaded midnight robbers, breaking through."

Aristotle strongly remarks that happiness is a certain energy; and daily observation shows that happiness and health are incompatible with idleness,—incompatible with the frivolity that lives in the wind of fashion and plays with the toy of the hour. Most men have opportunities without end for promoting and securing their own happiness. Time can be made the most of. Stray moments, improved and fertilised, may yield many brilliant results. It is astonishing how much can be done by using up the odds and ends of time in leisure hours. We must be prompt to catch the minutes as they fly, and make them yield the treasures they contain ere they escape for ever. In youth the hours are golden, in mature years they are silvern, in old age they are leaden. Who at twenty knows nothing, at thirty does nothing, at forty has nothing. Yet the Italian proverb adds, "He who knows nothing is confident in everything."

"We have," says Ruskin, "among mankind in general the three orders of being,—the lowest, sordid and selfish, which neither sees nor feels; the second, noble and sympathetic, but which neither sees nor feels without concluding or acting; and the third and highest, which loses sight in resolution and feeling in work." Promptitude and punctuality are among the blessings and comforts of life. For want of these gifts some of the greatest men have failed. Curran once said to Grattan, "You would be the greatest man of your day, Grattan, if you would buy a few yards of red tape and tie up your bills and papers." Mackintosh failed for want of method and punctuality, though endowed with the noblest intellectual powers. Cavour was one of the most punctual of men, and achieved greatness independent of red tape.

In the most ordinary affairs—in the business or calling by which we live—at home or abroad—we must take heed of the value of time, keep watch over it, and be punctual to others as well as to ourselves. Without punctuality, indeed, men are kept in a perpetual state of worry, trouble, and annoyance. Punctuality is said to be the politeness of kings. It is also the politeness of subjects. When a certain nobleman, who had made an appointment with George III., went to his Majesty too late, the king made a remark upon his unpunctuality; on which the nobleman replied, "Better late than never."—"No," said the king, "that is a mistake; I say, *better never than late.*" "Too late" is the curse of life: too late for obedience; too late for love; too late for respect; too late for reverence; too late for reform; too late for success; but not too late for ruin.

No life need be useless unless its owner chooses. We can improve and elevate ourselves, and improve and

elevate others. We can make ourselves better, and make others better. But this can only be done by the patient use of our moral and intellectual faculties. Miss Julia Wedgwood says, "Of all the mental gifts, the rarest is intellectual patience, and the last lesson of culture is to believe in difficulties which are invisible to ourselves." Many are born with noble gifts and talents; but patient labour is necessary to make them available. Bacon, Newton, and Watt—Pitt, Wellington, and Palmerston—Scott, Byron, and Thackeray—worked as hard in their lifetime as common mechanics. Indeed, no man of ascendancy in science, politics, or literature, can maintain and advance his position without long-continued patience and long-protracted labour.[1]

Buffon was probably not far from the truth when he asserted that the genius of great men consisted in their superior patience. Nothing repelled nor tired them; they turned every moment to account. "Not a day without a line" was the maxim of Apelles. Constant and intelligent observation was the practice of Newton. "We must ascertain what will do, by finding out what will *not* do," was the saying of Watt.

The man who observes patiently and intelligently, and who tests his observation by careful inquiry, becomes the discoverer and inventor. He brings the facts of truth and accuracy to bear upon every subject he investigates, whether

[1] Victor Hugo says:—"Les opiniatres sont les sublimes. Qui n'est que brave n'a qu'un accès, que n'est que vaillant n'a qu'un tempérament, qui n'est que courageux n'a qu'une vertu, l'obstene dans le vrai a la grandeur. Presque tout le secret des grands cœurs est dans le mot: *perseverando*. La Perseverance est au courage ce que la roue est au levier, c'ést le renouvellement perpetuel du point d'appui."

Quetelet says:—"L'homme qui tend toujours vers le même but finit par acquérir une force morale immense."

it be science, art, literature, law, politics, physiology, or invention. Theories are human, but facts are divine. The habit of patient attention to facts is one of the chief powers to be cultivated. It was one of Newton's remarks, that the only faculty in which he excelled other men was in the power he possessed of keeping a problem before his mind, and perpetually thinking it over and testing it by repeated inquiry, until he had succeeded in effecting its solution.

Iago embodies a lesson of wisdom in his speech to Brabantio: "'Tis in ourselves that we are thus and thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our *wills* are gardeners: so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce; set hyssop, and weed up thyme; supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many; either to have it sterile with idleness, or manured with industry,—why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills." Though we may hate Iago, we thank him for teaching this wholesome lesson.

WILL, indeed! But this requires courage, patient courage. It requires the fortitude which can resist, bear up, and hold on, in spite of difficulties. It needs that resolute effort of the will which we call perseverance. Perseverance is energy made habitual; and perseverance in labour, judiciously and continuously applied, becomes genius. Success in removing obstacles depends upon this law of mechanics,—the greatest amount of force at your disposal concentrated at a given point. If your constitutional force be less than another man's, you equal him if you continue it longer and concentrate it more. A man's genius is always, at the beginning of life, as much unknown to himself as to others. It is only after repeated trials that he dares to think himself equal to undertakings in which those who succeed have secured the admiration of mankind.

The spring which issues from the mountain rock as a brook, by the accumulation of streamlets becomes a rivulet, then a rolling river, and eventually part of the fathomless ocean, simply by pushing steadily and persistently onward.

Many are dismayed by difficulties, which in most cases are really our helpers. They teach us experience and incite us to perseverance. "The head of Hercules," says Ruskin, "was always struck covered with a lion's skin, with the claws joining under the chin, to show that when we had conquered our misfortunes they became a help to us." Events are never in themselves absolute. Their results depend upon the quality and character of the individual. Misfortune may even be the stepping-stone for genius—a treasure to the able man, though to the weak man an abyss. Many a man of possible distinction and goodness has been lost to the world simply because nothing interrupted the course of his prosperity. Everything depends upon will and willingness. Where the will is ready, the ways are not wanting.

> "This Life is progress; for the better still
> We hope and strive; and oft Adversity
> Is Truth's best teacher—stimulates to life
> Else dormant faculties; invokes our faith,
> Submission, and endurance."

There is no such thing as remaining stationary in life. All that is human goes backward if it does not go forward. Where obstacles intervene we must march through them—difficulties notwithstanding. Sir Philip Sidney's motto was a fine one—*Viam aut inveniam aut faciam*, I will find a way or make one. Ease makes children; it is difficulty that makes men. Many persons owe their good fortune to some disadvantage under which they have laboured, and it is in struggling against it that their best faculties are brought into play. Strength or weakness of character is never

more truly tested than by the occurrence to an individual of some sudden change in his outward condition; and this is especially observable if the change be a painful one. He is thrown suddenly upon his own resources, and displays altogether unexpected qualities of character which often lead to distinction and eminence.

Suffering is a heavy plough driven by an iron hand; it cuts deeply into the rebellious soil, but opens it up to the fertilising influences of nature, and often ends in the richest crops. Even antagonism of the most active kind is one of man's greatest blessings. It evokes strength, perseverance, and energy of character. Thus our antagonist becomes our helper. Men may be plucky, but pluck without perseverance is a poor thing. Emotions which live and die as emotions add very little to human regeneration. It is only by constant effort, even in the midst of failures, that the greatest things are accomplished. "Failures," says the Welsh proverb, "are but the pillars of success."

We have spoken of the gospel of work; let us speak of the gospel of leisure. "Without labour there is no leisure," has become a proverb. Yet one may labour too much, and become so habituated to work and to work only, as to be unable to enjoy leisure. Men cannot rise to the better attributes of their nature when their life is entirely filled with labour. Some devote themselves to business so exclusively, with the object of taking leisure at some future time, that when they have accumulated enough for the purpose, they find themselves utterly unable to find enjoyment or pleasure in cessation from work. Their *Château en Espagne* has vanished. It is "too late." The mind has become crippled and dwarfed by too exclusive occupation. They cannot find variety of employment. Their free thought has dwindled; their mind has been exercised in one groove

only—perhaps a narrow one; they cannot even take a holiday. The leisure which they have found proves of little use to them. Like the retired tallow-chandler, they must needs return to their old occupation "on melting days."

Work is not quite a blessing when it degenerates into drudgery; for drudgery does not produce happiness or beauty of character. On the contrary, its tendency is to narrow and degrade it. Work is not the be-all and the end-all of humanity. It is not an end in itself; still less the highest earthly good. It is a great thing, however, to be independent—to maintain ourselves and pay our debts out of our own honest labour. Work is not ignoble; but it is ignoble to earn a shilling, and to live idle on threepence a day till the pence are exhausted. "Well," says Balzac, "the thousands of tons of pleasure that we may gather in the fields of society will not pay our debts at the end of the month; so we must work, work, work." By the sweat of our brow or brain we must reap our harvest. Though riches may corrupt the morals and harden the heart, yet poverty breaks the spirit and courage of a man, plants his pillow with thorns, and makes it difficult for him to be honest, virtuous, and honourable.

Thus, everything has to be taken with moderation. Work is good and honourable, not so much for itself as for higher objects—for the cultivation of the mind, for the development of the higher powers, and for the due enjoyment of life. Indeed, as we shall find, some of the best work in the spheres of literature and science has been done by men habitually occupied in business affairs. It is the excess of business, carried on under extreme pressure, which is so fatal to serene and happy existence. "He that is wise," said Lord Bacon, "let him pursue some desire or other;

for he that doth not affect something in chief, unto him all things are distasteful and tedious." And again: "The most active or busy man that hath been or can be, hath no question many vacant times of leisure, while he expecteth the tides and returns of business, except he be either tedious and of no despatch, or lightly and unworthily ambitious to meddle with things that may be better done by others."

A great point is to vary our occupation. We must do one thing well; and for the rest take relaxation, and adopt variety of work. This is the true way to enjoy leisure and preserve the bloom and grace of life. Holidays can then be enjoyed; exercise will be found for faculties of mind hidden away unused; and variety of work will recruit the springs of pleasure and give a crispness to enjoyment, so as to render life a continuous holiday. There are so many ways of innocently and profitably enjoying leisure. Nature opens her inexhaustible store of charms. We can survey and study her rich variety; examine her proceedings; and pierce into her secrets. Her range is infinite—animals, plants, minerals, and the wide extent of scientific inquiry. For the lover of books, literature offers a wide scope. There is the ancient and modern history of men, illustrating the best methods of swaying, educating, and ruling them, for their own advantage and the progress of the world's civilisation. Then there is the boundless store of literature,—biography, poetry, the drama,—all full of fascinating interest.

The greatest Italian painter and the greatest Italian poet conversely varied their occupations. Michael Angelo went from painting to sonnet-writing; and Dante exchanged his pen for the painter's pencil; these were their holidays of the brain. Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo were many-sided, and almost universal artists. They were alike

great in painting, sculpture, architecture, and engineering. Rossetti, too, was as great in poetry as in painting.

Other brain-workers demand physical exercise; they take to deer-stalking or grouse-shooting, not so much for the game they bag, as for the health they seek. Mr. Ashworth, the Quaker, though unused to shooting, said that grouse-shooting among the heather had saved his life. Angling is the quietest of all pursuits out of doors: it was the hobby of the analytical and philosophical Paley. He impaled a worm as he impaled an antagonist. Sir Humphry Davy and Wollaston were fly-fishers. Davy gave us his experiences in *Salmonia;* he inspired Wollaston with his love of angling, at the same time that he enabled him, when out of doors, to indulge his opportunities for prosecuting the study of geology. Davy considered that the close communion with nature which angling affords is one of its chief charms. It has also an important influence in developing character.

"It is a pursuit of moral discipline," he said, "requiring patience, forbearance, and command of temper. As connected with natural science, it may be vaunted as demanding a knowledge of the habits of a considerable tribe of created beings—fishes, and the animals they prey upon—and an acquaintance with the signs and tokens of the weather and its changes, the nature of the waters, and of the atmosphere. As to its poetical relations, it carries us into the most wild and beautiful scenery of nature; amongst the mountain-lakes, and the clear and lovely streams that gush from the higher ranges of elevated hills, or that make their way through the cavities of calcareous strata. How delightful in the early spring, after the dull and tedious time of winter, when the frosts disappear, and the sunshine warms the earth and waters, to wander forth by some clear stream, to see the leaf bursting from the purple bud, to

scent the odours of the bank perfumed by the violet, and enamelled, as it were, with the primrose and the daisy; to wander upon the fresh turf below the shade of trees, where bright blossoms are filled with the music of the bee; . . . till, in pursuing your amusement in the calm and balmy evening, you are serenaded by the songs of the cheerful thrush and melodious nightingale, performing the offices of paternal love in thickets ornamented with the rose and woodbine."

Dalton, another philosopher, took pleasure in exercise in the open air—in walking to his native mountains, and climbing Helvellyn and Skiddaw. But his chief pleasure was bowling. He spent every Thursday, when the weather was fine, at a bowling-green near Manchester, when he joined some congenial associates in a turn at the old English game of bowls. When a distinguished professor of chemistry called at his house Dalton was out, but the professor was directed to look for him at a neighbouring bowling-green. Dalton quietly apologised for being out of his laboratory, but added that he liked to take a Saturday in the middle of the week.

There are other ways of enjoying an out-of-doors life. Scott planted trees at Abbotsford, wandering about the grounds with his favourite Tom Purdy. Daniel Webster enjoyed and improved his flocks and herds, and cultivated his waste lands. Scott was fond of horses and dogs, and Webster of sheep and swine. Admiral Nelson was fond of bird-nesting, and Admiral Collingwood of gardening. The poet Shelley took pleasure in sailing paper boats—sometimes of Bank of England notes—on the Thames or Serpentine. Dickens was a great walker. He was accustomed to walk from his office in Southampton Street, London, to his house at Gad's Hill Place, near Rochester. Southey

and Wordsworth were indefatigable walkers. They used to be seen "skelping" along the roads in Westmoreland. Wordsworth walked in his hodden gray and country-clogged shoon, sometimes starting up in the mist like a spectre. He studied for the most part out of doors; his poems indicating his abundant and engrossing love of nature. A stranger who was shown about Wordsworth's grounds asked to see his study. The servant took him to the library, and said, "This is master's library, but he studies in the fields."

William Hutton, the bookseller and historian of Birmingham, made repeated walking excursions. He walked, when in his seventy-ninth year, along the Roman Wall, between Wallsend in Northumberland to Bowness in Cumberland; and afterwards wrote an account of his excursion. In his eighty-fifth year he visited Coatham in Yorkshire, and wrote an account of the journey. He did not walk thither, but journeyed by carriage; but in his ninetieth year, he walked into and out of Birmingham, about five miles—his daughter saying, "I believe that his walks and his life will finish nearly together." He walked nearly to the end, and lived till ninety-two. "Contentment in old age," said Turganief, "is deserved by him alone who has not lost his faith in what is good, his persevering strength of will, and his desire for active employment."

Some take pleasure in riding. Men of sedentary occupations take to saddle-leather rather than sole-leather. It stirs up the liver and promotes circulation and digestion. Liston, the surgeon, was a great hunter. Voltaire, when at Cirey, hunted for an appetite. Abraham Tucker, author of *The Light of Nature*, used to ride over Banstead Downs to get an appetite for dinner. Paley tried to ride and even to gallop; he fell off many times; but he had plenty of pluck.

he tried again and again until he succeeded. An old writer has said, "Stomach is everything, and everything is Stomach." Those who cannot afford saddle-leather take to sole-leather, and walk; at all events you breathe fresh air, and exert the muscles of nearly every part of the body.

The principal amusement of Cheselden, the surgeon, was in witnessing pugilistic encounters. Mr. Procter (Barry Cornwall) told Hawthorne, the American, that in his younger days he had been a scientific pugilist, and once took a journey to have a sparring encounter with the Game Chicken. Two prime ministers, Malon of Belgium and Gladstone of England, took to the felling of trees. Thalberg, the pianist, when he retired from the musical profession, bought a vineyard, grew grapes, and made wine. At the Paris Exhibition of 1867 he obtained from the juries an "honourable mention" of his wine of Pausilippo. On the other hand, Rossini went into cookery. He delighted in good living, and prided himself on his table; he invented sauces, salads, and new preparations of truffles. To a great singer he wrote: "That which interests you in a different manner to music, dear Angélique, is the discovery that I have just made a new salad, for which I hasten to send you the receipt. . . . Truffles give to this condiment a kind of *nimbe*, fit to plunge a gourmand into ecstasy." Many cookery receipts which have become celebrated are said to have been of Rossini's invention.

Shenstone enjoyed his leisure hours in laying out his grounds at the Leasowes, and in adorning them by his taste. They still point out at Vaucluse the gardens, adjoining the natural grotto, which Petrarch formed with so much care, and which he mentions in his letters. It was there that he composed some of his finest sonnets. De Crébillon, styled the Æschylus of France, after producing his *Idomeus* and

Rhamistus, withdrew from the world, disgusted with court neglect, and passed a life of abstinence amidst a large number of cats and dogs, whose attachment, he said, consoled him for man's ingratitude. Machiavelli, when in the country, spent much of his time in killing thrushes. Writing to a friend, he said, "Up till now I have been killing thrushes. Getting up before daylight, I prepared my snares, and set off with a heap of cages on my back. I caught at least two, and at most seven thrushes. In this manner I passed all the month of September; and, though the amusement was a queer and vulgar one, I was very sorry when it failed me."

More innocent was Dugald Stewart's attempt to balance a peacock's feather on his nose. When a philosopher visited Woodhouselee, Stewart was found engaged in this exercise. Patrick Fraser Tytler, the historian, was his competitor in the amusement. John Hunter's amusement was the study of bees; as that of Sir John Lubbock is that of ants, bees, and wasps. Both made their amusements scientifically productive. Hunter took pains with everything, and when he said, "Let me amuse myself with bees," it was but the beginning of a series of researches, the result of which, embodied in an essay, Sir James Paget declares to be almost faultless at the present time. When he broke his own tendo-Achilles, he was led to study the subject, and to introduce a new method of treatment of the rupture. Sir John Lubbock is equally indefatigable. His record of observations on the social Hymenoptera is most fascinating, and one is in doubt whether most to admire the patience and industry of the ants, the bees, and the wasps, or the patience and industry of their observer.

Some reverend gentlemen, besides engaging in the duties of their calling, have amused themselves by inventing

machines. The Rev. Dr. Cartwright, incumbent of Brampton, near Chesterfield, was the most extraordinary of these inventors. He not only invented the power-loom, which has had so remarkable an influence on the manufacturing supremacy of England, but the wool-combing machine, the brick-making machine, the rope-making machine, and various improvements in the steam-engine. The Rev. Patrick Bell, minister of Carmylie in Forfarshire, was another of these clerical inventors. The reaping-machine was the issue of his spare hours. It was perfectly successful when invented; but hand-labour was at that time cheap, and it was not adopted. It was received with acclamation in America, where hand-labour was dear; and after the lapse of nearly half a century it was returned from America to England and Scotland, and is now in general use.

Professional inventors, such as Mr. Nasmyth, the inventor of the steam-hammer, and Mr. Siemens, the inventor of the electrical engine, have turned, for variation of study and pursuit, to other subjects. Mr. Nasmyth has applied himself to astronomy; has made his own telescopes, studied the sun and the moon, and achieved much distinction in astronomical science. So have Mr. Lassell and Mr. De la Rue—the one a Liverpool brewer, the other a London publisher. Mr. Bessemer, the inventor of Bessemer steel, has also applied his wonderful talents to the same subject.

I am indebted for the following anecdote to Mr. Nasmyth, who is not only a great inventor and scientist, but an extraordinary repertory of anecdote. It relates to Dr. Adam, late Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, the author of *Roman Antiquities*, and other works. Dr. Adam, in the intervals of his labours as a teacher, was accustomed to spend many hours in the shop of his friend Booge, the famous cutler, sometimes grinding knives and scissors, at

other times driving the wheel. One day, two English gentlemen attending the University called upon Booge (for he was an excellent Greek and Latin scholar), in order that he might construe for them some passage in Greek which they could not understand. On looking at it, Booge found that the passage "fickled" him; but, being a wag, he said to the students, "Oh, it's quite simple: my labouring man at the wheel yonder will translate it for you. John!" calling to the old man, "come here a moment, will you?" The apparent labourer came forward, when Booge showed him the passage in Greek which the students wished to have translated. The old man put on his spectacles, examined the passage, and proceeded to give a learned exposition, in the course of which he cited several scholastic authors in support of his views as to its proper translation. Having done so, he returned to the cutler's wheel. Of course the students were amazed at the learning of the labouring man! They said they had heard much of the erudition of the Edinburgh tradesmen, but what they had listened to was beyond anything they could have imagined. Those who have had the good fortune to see the admirable collection of portraits by Raeburn at the Winter Exhibition of the Royal Academy a few years ago, would notice an excellent portrait of Dr. Adam, with the intelligent, kindly, and humorous expression of his venerable countenance. Dr. Adam died at his post, in his classroom at the High School, in his eightieth year. His dissolution was foreshadowed by an imagined darkness, during which he said to his pupils, "Boys, it's getting quite dark! You had better go home!" He then fell back in his chair, and ceased to breathe. Thus passed away one of the most learned and amiable men of his time.

Natural History has also attracted many students from the

specially learned, and even from the labouring class. Who has not read White's *Natural History of Selborne?* The book gains in charm with years. It takes you out of doors, and keeps you there. It is always full of magical interest. "Since I first read him," says James Russell Lowell, "I have walked over some of his favourite haunts, but I still see them through his eyes rather than by any recollection of actual and personal vision. The book has the delightfulness of absolute leisure. Mr. White seems never to have had any harder work to do than to study the habits of his feathered fellow-townsfolk, or to watch the ripening of his peaches on the wall. His volumes are the journal of Adam in Paradise—

> 'Annihilating all that's made
> To a green thought in a green shade.'"

Observers, students, and inquirers of the humblest ranks have found the serenest pleasure in Natural History. Edward the shoemaker, and Dick the baker, were by no means exceptional men. About Manchester, and London, especially in the East End, are clubs of working men who devote their leisure hours to botany, birds, moths, bees, ants, and various departments of Natural History. In Wales they are great in geology. One of the best of living British botanists was originally an ordinary farm labourer. Southey had a great admiration for the pursuits of Natural History, and regretted that he had not early devoted his attention to it, instead of to written books. "I know nothing of botany myself," he said, "and every day regret that I do not. It is a settled purpose of my heart, if my children live, to make them good naturalists."

A little attention to the works of nature will fill up the gaps in our time, and supply us with pleasant, and possibly

useful information. We never know where the carefully-obtained knowledge may find its practical application. Sowerby, the botanist, began life as a miniature and landscape painter. It was in order to be correct in his landscape foregrounds that he devoted himself to the drawing of plants. He made inquiries into their nature, which led him to the study of botany, and he soon became so fascinated that he devoted the rest of his life to the study of the subject. "There is no saying shocks me so much," said Abraham Cowley, "as that which I hear very often, 'that a man does not know how to pass his time.' It would have been but ill spoken by Methuselah in the nine hundred and sixty-ninth year of his life; so far is it from us, who have not time to attain to the utmost perfection of any part of science, to have cause to complain that we are forced to be idle for want of work. The first minister of state has not so much business in public as a wise man has in private; if the one has little leisure to be alone, the other has less leisure to be in company; the one has but part of the affairs of our nation, the other all the works of God and Nature under his consideration."[1]

Dr. Isaac Barrow, one of the most energetic men of his time, as well as one of the most conscientious, preached a sermon upon the Industry of Gentlemen, which has since been published among his collected works. No one could better illustrate the subject from his own personal life and experience. Although he was at first a dull boy,—so dull, indeed, that his father is said to have wished that if it pleased God to take any of his children it might be Isaac,—yet, when he had passed through Charterhouse school, which he did fighting his way; and when he went to Petersham, and afterwards to Trinity College, Cambridge, he soon established

[1] *Prose Works*, 1826, p. 132, in "Essay on Solitude."

a character for steadiness and application. Barrow first intended to practise medicine, and accordingly studied anatomy and physiology; but on obtaining a fellowship he began to study theology, as required by the statutes of the College. His desire to investigate ecclesiastical history led him to the study of astronomy, and eventually to the higher branches of mathematics, in which he acquired distinguished proficiency. He continued the study of the classics so successfully, that the "dull boy," on the resignation of the Greek professor, was recommended for appointment to his chair. But the republicans, under Cromwell, being then in power, and Barrow being a staunch royalist, as well as suspected of "Arminianism," he was not appointed, and resolved to quit College and travel for a time through France and Italy, as far as Constantinople and Smyrna. Holding that courage was a characteristic quality of the gentleman, Barrow bore ample testimony to the excellence of the virtue by his word as well as deed. While on his passage from Leghorn to Constantinople in 1657, the ship in which he sailed was attacked by an Algerine pirate. Barrow would not go below; he counselled resistance, and took a vigorous part in the defence of the ship. He remained upon deck until the pirate sheered off. When asked why he had not gone down into the hold, and left the defence of the vessel to those to whom it belonged, he replied, "It concerned no man more than myself; I would rather have lost my life than have fallen into the hands of those merciless infidels."

The Restoration took place shortly after Barrow's return to England. He was then appointed Greek professor at Cambridge, and afterwards Gresham professor of Geometry. He resigned the last appointment on accepting the Lucasian professorship; and this too he resigned, after holding the office for six years, in favour of his pupil, the famous Isaac

Newton, destined to make one of the greatest advances in astronomical science. Indeed, the history of Isaac Barrow is a history of resignations upon principle. When appointed a prebendary of Salisbury Cathedral, he applied the whole of the revenue to charitable purposes; and when appointed the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, he resigned the revenues of all the Church preferments which he held. He died too young, at the age of forty-seven. Though his life was comparatively short, the number of his works, especially on Geometry and Mathematics, was very great. His sermons also are storehouses of thought, full of ripe experience and wise observation of practical life. He taught and enforced the wholesome lesson of industry,—besides godliness, prayerfulness, uprightness, and truthfulness.

His own life supplied the best possible example; for he was alike industrious as a Scholar, a Christian, and a Gentleman. He devoted five elaborate expositions to the subject of industry—two upon industry in general, one each upon the industry of Christians, the industry of Scholars, and the industry of Gentlemen. "To achieve knowledge," he said, "and to display the highest virtues of life—hope, temperance, patience, contentedness—require labour and effort. If travelling in a rough way; if climbing up a steep hill; if combating stern foes and fighting sharp battles; if crossing the grain of our nature and desires; if continually holding a strict rein over all our parts and powers, be things of labour and trouble, then greatly such is the practice of virtue. . . . Industry argues a generous and ingenuous complexion of soul. It implieth a mind not content with mean and vulgar things, but aspiring to things of high worth, and pursuing them in a brave way, with adventurous courage, by its own forces, through difficulties and obstacles. It signifieth in a man a heart not enduring to owe the sustenance or

convenience of his life to the labour or the liberality of others; to pilfer a livelihood from the world; to reap the benefit of other men's care and toil, without rendering a full compensation, or outdoing his private obligations by considerable service and beneficence to the public. A noble heart will disdain to subsist like a drone upon the honey gathered by others' labour; like a vermin to filch its food out of the public granary; or like a shark to prey on the lesser fry; but will one way or other earn his own subsistence. Indeed, industry sweetens all our enjoyments, and seasons them with a grateful relish; for as no man can well enjoy himself, or find sound content in anything, while business or duty lie unfinished on his hand; so when he hath done his best toward the despatch of his work, he will then comfortably take his ease, and enjoy his pleasure; then his food doth taste savourily, then his divertisements and recreations have a lively gustfulness, then his sleep is very sound and pleasant, according to that of the Preacher, 'The sleep of a labouring man is sweet.'"

One of the negative qualities of industry is, that it keeps one out of mischief. When a man is busy the devil can hardly find an opportunity of tempting him. "A working monk," said Cassian, "is assaulted by one devil, but an idle one is spoiled by numberless bad spirits." Sloth and idleness are among the basest of qualities. The idle man is a cypher in society,—nay worse, he is a wen and a burden; consuming, not producing; a disfigurement, and not an ornament. "The way of a slothful man is a hedge of thorns," said Solomon. "By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through." Industry is indeed the best fence to innocence and virtue. It is a bar to all kinds of sin and vice, guarding the avenues of the

heart, and keeping off the occasions and temptations of vice.

Are we rich? Industry is requisite for managing our wealth wisely, not only for our own and our families good, but for the benefit of others. Have we honour and repute among men? Industry is necessary to maintain and enhance our position, and to enable us to give a still more salutary example to others. The noblest birth, the highest born gentleman, cannot shirk the duty and privilege of industry. If he conceives his privilege to be idleness, then it is his privilege to be most unhappy; for if he be of no worth or use, and perform no service to God and the world, he can have no title to happiness. "He hath," says Dr. Barrow, "all the common duties of piety, of charity, of sobriety, to discharge with fidelity; for being a gentleman doth not exempt him from being a Christian, but rather more strictly doth engage him to be such in a higher degree than others. He is particularly God's steward, entrusted with substance for the sustenance and supply of God's family. He hath more talents committed to him, and consequently more employment required of him: if a rustic labourer, or a mechanic artisan, hath one talent, a gentleman hath ten; he hath innate vigour of spirit, and height of courage fortified by use; he hath accomplishment and refinement of parts by liberal education; he hath the succours of parentage, alliance, and friendship; he hath wealth, he hath honour, he hath power and authority; he hath command of time and leisure: he hath so many precious and useful talents entrusted to him, not to be wrapped up in a napkin or hidden under ground; not to be squandered away in private satisfactions, but for negotiations, to be put out to use, to be improved in the most advantageous way to God's service. . . . In fine, he alone doth appear truly a gentleman, who hath the heart

to undergo hard tasks for public good, and willingly taketh pains to oblige his neighbours and friends. The work, indeed, of gentlemen is not so gross, but it may be as smart and painful as any other. For all hard work is not manual; there are other instruments of action besides the plough, the spade, the hammer, the shuttle; nor doth every work produce sweat, and visible living of body: the head may work hard in contrivance of good designs; the tongue may be very active in dispensing advice, persuasion, comfort and edification in virtue; a man may bestir himself in 'going about to do good'; these are works employing the cleanly industry of a gentleman."

There are, however, various notions about "the true gentleman" amongst the humbler classes. When Sir Walter Scott visited Ireland, and went to see St. Kevin's Bed near Glendalough, Mr. Plunkett, who accompanied him, told the female guide that the visitor was a poet. "Poet?" said she; "the divil a bit of him, but an honourable gentleman; he gave me half-a-crown!" So, when the London cabby receives double his fare, he thinks to himself, "That is quite the gentleman!" Even those of a better class often associate gentlemanliness with money giving; which in many cases is no better than snobbishness. What is it to be a gentleman? Thackeray says: It is to be honest, to be gentle, to be generous, to be brave, to be wise; and possessing all these qualities, to exercise them in the most graceful outward manner. St. Palaye names twelve virtues which are the necessary companions to the true knight: Faith, charity, justice, good sense, prudence, temperance, firmness, truth, liberality, diligence, hope, and valour. To these might be added tolerance and consideration for the feelings and opinions of others.

The true gentleman is of no rank or class. He may be

a peasant or a noble. Every man may be gentle, civil, tolerant, and forbearant. You may find politeness in the tent of the Arab, or in the cottage of the ploughman. Politeness is but natural, genial, and manly deference to others, without sycophancy or hypocrisy. Riches and rank have no necessary connection with gentlemanly qualities. The humblest man may be a gentleman, in word and in spirit. He may be honest, truthful, upright, temperate, courageous, self-respecting, and self-helping. The poor man with a rich spirit is in all way superior to the rich man with a poor spirit. To use St. Paul's words, the former is "as having nothing, yet possessing all things," while the other, though possessing all things, really has nothing. Only the poor in spirit are really poor. For the man who is rich in spirit, the world is, as it were, held in trust, and in freedom from the grosser cares of life, he alone is entitled to be called the true gentleman.

There is a natural nobility and politeness which consists in generosity and excellence of soul; and this may be found in the lowest ranks of life. Witness Chaucer's peasant, who lived in peace and perfect charity, loving God with all his heart, whether prosperous or in calamity, and his neighbour as himself; who would also work

> "For Christes sake, for every poure wight,
> Withouten hire, if it lay in his might."

Politeness of manner is perhaps the last touch in the portrait of a noble character. "A beautiful behaviour," says Emerson "is better than a beautiful form; it gives a higher pleasure than statues and pictures; it is the finest of the high arts. Those who exhibit this feature are the creators and revivifiers of sympathy and Christian socialism." It would scarcely be expected that the gruff Dr. Johnson

would insist on the importance of politeness in society. "Depend upon it," he said, "the want of it never fails to produce something disagreeable to one or the other." Though half-blind himself, he willingly offered on one occasion to assist an alarmed lady across Fleet Street, to keep her clear of the dangers of the traffic. He piqued himself on his politeness to ladies, and always handed them to their carriage from his house in Bolt Court.

Mr. Quincy, President of the United States, was a gentleman in word, manner, and conduct. He appreciated the services of others, and was polite even to the meanest. To his secretary, who was found behindhand with his work, he said, "When you have a number of duties to perform, always do the most disagreeable one first." He was courteous, even to negroes. When riding to Cambridge in a crowded omnibus, a coloured woman got in, and could nowhere find a seat. The President instantly gave her his own, and stood the rest of the way—a silent rebuke to the general rudeness. Politeness was in him not only an instinct, but a principle.

A contrast may be given to the politeness of Johnson and Quincy. At the time when beards were commonly worn, Philip I. of Spain sent the young Constable de Castile to Rome to congratulate Sextus the Sixth on his advancement to the Papal chair. But the young Constable's beard had not yet grown. The Pope said to him, "Are there so few men in Spain that your king sends me one without a beard?" "Sire," replied the proud Spaniard, "if his Majesty possessed the least idea that you imagined merit lay in a beard, he would have deputed a goat to wait upon you, not a gentleman!"

Politeness may be considered as a sort of guard which covers the rough edges of our nature, and prevents them

from wounding others. He was a gentleman who said, "I would as soon give a man a bad sixpence as a bad word." Ancient and distinguished birth, unless associated with noble characteristics, has no necessary connection with true gentlemanliness. The stamp of birth is not an indelible mark, for it may be associated with meanness, cowardice, and slothfulness. Birth will no doubt have its influence, in inciting men to deeds of greatness and goodness by recollections of noble ancestry, and by the thought of sustaining and increasing the illustrious honour bequeathed to them. "Remember," said Sir Henry Sidney to his son Philip, "the noble blood you are descended of by your mother's side, and think that only by virtuous life and good action you may be an ornament to that illustrious family; and otherwise, through vice and sloth, you shall be counted *labes generis*, one of the greatest curses that can happen to man."

The noble Sir Philip Sidney did not belie his father's bequest. The gracious manner in which he handed the cup of water to the wounded soldier on the field of Zutphen will never be forgotten. After his death, his friend Fulke Greville spoke of him with dignified regret. "Indeed," he said, "he was a true model of worth; a man fit for conquest, plantation, reformation, or what action soever is the greatest and grandest among men; withal such a lover of mankind and goodness that whatsoever had any real parts found in him comfort, protection, and participation to the utmost of his power. . . Neither was this in him a private but a public affection; his chief aim being not wife, children, and himself, but above all things the honour of his Maker, and the service of his prince and country."

Nobles do not always descend from nobles. Many of the greatest men of antiquity rose from the humblest ranks.

Plato was not a noble, though philosophy ennobled him. Cleanthus, the Stoical philosopher, was first a wrestler, and afterwards obtained a subsistence by watering the gardens of the citizens of Athens. Pythagoras was the son of a silversmith, Euripides of a gardener, Demosthenes of a cutler, and Virgil of a potter. The lowest may rank amongst the highest in position, as the highest, for want of honour and conduct, may rank amongst the lowest. The first raise themselves by emulation and virtue, as the last debase themselves by negligence and vice.

To descend to our own times. Who does not know of the humble origin of Shakespeare, the son of the country wool-stapler? Ben Jonson, bricklayer though he was, remained to the end a "growing gentleman." Does not every reader know of the gentlemen who have sprung from the sphere of labour, from Inigo Jones, the clothworker; Quentyn Matsys, the blacksmith; Josiah Wedgwood, the potter; James Watt, the mathematical instrument-maker; John Hunter, the carpenter; Isaac Milner, the hand-loom weaver; Joseph Lancaster, the basketmaker; to Robert Burns, the ploughman; and John Keats, the druggist?

Thomas Carlyle's father was a mason. "A noble craft," said the author of the *French Revolution*, "is that of a mason; a good building will last longer than most books, than one book of a million. . . . Let me learn of *him;* let me write my Books as he built his Houses, and walk as blamelessly through this shadow-world (if God so will) to rejoin him at last. . . . Perhaps he was among Scottish Peasants what Samuel Johnson was among English Authors. I have a sacred pride in my Peasant Father, and would not exchange him for any king known to me. Gold, and the guinea-stamp; the man, and the clothes of the man! Let

me thank God for that greatest of blessings, and strive to live worthily of it."

When Hugh Miller, originally a stone-mason, was consulted by Dr. M'Cosh as to accepting the chair of Logic and Metaphysics at Belfast, Miller answered, "If a man has a high heaven-bestowed gift, even if it be that of a mason or mechanic, he should exercise it to the glory of God. You have such a gift; go and use it, and God will open spheres of usefulness to you." After achieving the highest reputation through his lectures and published works, Dr. M'Cosh was transferred to a higher position by being elected to fill the office of President to Princeton College, United States.

The character of the Christian gentleman cannot be better described than in the words of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians: "Charity [or Love] suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth."[1] The man who acts in the spirit of these words necessarily exhibits the very highest form of conduct. "The only true refinement—that which goes deep down into the character—comes from Christian charity or love. If such a spirit were universal, a rude clown, or un-

[1] 1 Corinthians xiii. 4-8. A lady of our acquaintance has pointed out to us the Fifteenth Psalm as also descriptive of the true gentleman: "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not."

mannered peasant, or common-minded workman could not be found."[1]

The third Earl of Balcarres had a peculiar sympathy with St. James, and delighted in his Catholic Epistle, as that emphatically of a gentleman — a term implying, in his acceptance of it, all Christian excellence and perfection. Of the fourth earl, Pitt said most characteristically: "Balcarres was out of humour with us when in prosperity, but staunch when we were in danger—that is the man."

Cardinal Manning, when speaking at Birmingham of possible dangers to England, mentioned the four seas and the four virtues. He said he did not put his trust in the four seas, he put none in the silvery streak; but he did put his trust in those four great national virtues—of prudence, which made perfect the intellect; of justice, which made the perfect will; of temperance, which taught men to master themselves in the solicitations of pleasure; and of fortitude, which made them strong in suffering and in difficulty.

The truest Christian politeness is cheerfulness. It becomes the old and young, and is always graceful. It is the best of good company, for it adorns its wearer more than rubies and diamonds set in gold. It costs nothing, and yet is invaluable; for it blesses the possessor, and springs up into abundant happiness in the bosom of others. It seeks for the brightest side of human nature. It avoids the ascription of motives, and is forbearant in its judgment of others. In conversation it habitually chooses pleasant topics, instead of faults and shortcomings. It scatters abroad kind words, cherishes kind thoughts, and in all ways sweetens social intercourse. Cheerfulness is the beauty of the mind, and, like personal beauty, it wins almost every-

[1] The Rev. Frederick Robertson.

thing else. Yet it never grows old, for there is nothing more beautiful than cheerfulness in an old face.

"A merry heart," says Solomon, "maketh a cheerful countenance;" and elsewhere, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." Cheerfulness is indispensable to manly life; and is in many respects the source of success. The spirit must be kept elastic, in order to scare away fantasies and overcome the difficulties that have to be encountered in great undertakings. In fact, cheerfulness means a contented spirit, a pure heart, and a kind and loving disposition. It means also humility and charity, a generous appreciation of others, and a modest opinion of self. It is not so much by great deeds that good is to be done, as by the little civil courtesies of life, the daily quiet virtues, the Christian temper and sympathy, and the good qualities of relatives and friends. Little rivulets are of more use than warring cataracts; the former flow on in gentle quiet beauty, the latter carry before them ruin and destruction. It is the same with the acts of our daily lives.

Sympathy is the universal solvent. Nothing is understood without it. One cannot be tolerant of others without the help of sympathy. The inbred capacity of men varies according to their power of sympathy. When it is wanting, efforts made to improve or construct the Christian character almost invariably fail. Numbers of people walk up and down along their own narrow plank of self-enjoyment, pondering over their own merits or demerits, but thinking nothing of those who are entitled to their help. It is the fear of leaving their narrow plank that has chained down many to grovelling mediocrity. Thus we have great bigots and great censors—all arising from the want of sympathy. Yet sympathy is the essence of Christianity. "Love one

another" is a simple saying, but it contains a gospel sufficient to renovate the world. The last words which Judge Talfourd uttered from the bench immediately before he died were these, "If I were to be asked what is the great want of English society—to mingle class with class—I would say in one word, the want is the *want of sympathy*." And with the word Sympathy trembling upon his lips, the spirit of Talfourd passed away.

The character of the gentleman implies a loftiness of conduct, as regards the dictates of morality and the precepts of religion. He will not contract debts which he has not the means of paying. He will scorn to be indebted to others, who are perhaps poorer than himself, for the means of dressing and maintenance. It is only the gent—a caricature of the gentleman—who overdresses himself, and sports ostentatious clothing and false jewellery. The gent is but a hypocrite, though it is said that hypocrisy is a tribute which vice pays to virtue; yet the gent's attempt to pass the mock for the real is usually well understood.

Gentlemen at once identify each other. They look each other in the eye and grasp each other's hands. They know each other instinctively. They appreciate each other's merits. This was one of Dr. Chalmers's characteristics—his exquisite and joyful appreciation of excellence. Besides, they recognise each other's kindness and mercifulness. A gentleman will be merciful to his dog; the gent is not merciful even to his wife. The gentleman is genial as well as gentle. He is generous, not necessarily in the giving of money; for money, indiscriminately given, often does more harm than good. But he endeavours to be discriminate and careful in his deeds of mercy.

A man's true greatness lies in the consciousness of an honest purpose in life. This is founded on a proper esti-

mate of himself, on frequent self-examination, and a steady obedience to the rule which he knows to be right. Experience teaches that we become that which we make ourselves. Every man stamps his own value upon himself, for we are great or little according to our will. We try to be honest, kind, and true, and little by little we become that for which we strive; and what once was difficult, by degrees becomes less and less so. Activity, goodness, benevolence, and temperance grow by use; and that which was once accomplished with effort becomes easy and natural. Thus a man may make himself generous, just, sympathetic, and magnanimous,—civil, polite, forbearant, and gentlemanly.

The true gentleman is known by his strict sense of honour; by his sympathy, his gentleness, his forbearance, and his generosity. He is essentially a man of truth, speaking and doing rightly, not merely in the sight of men, but in his secret and private behaviour. Truthfulness is moral transparency. Hence the gentleman promises nothing that he has not the means of performing. The Duke of Wellington proudly declared that truth was the characteristic of an English officer, that when he was bound by a parole he would not break his word; for the gentleman scorns to lie, in word or deed, and is ready to brave all consequences rather than debase himself by falsehood. "Le bon sang ne peut mentir," says the old French proverb.

The forbearing use of power is one of the surest attributes of the true gentleman. He will not use his authority wrongfully, and will shrink from oppressing those who are subject to him. How does he act towards those who are equal to him or under him—to his wife, his children, or his servants? How does the officer conduct himself towards his men, the schoolmaster towards his pupils, the employer

towards his "hands," the rich man towards those who are poorer than himself? The forbearing use of power in such cases, affords the truest touchstone of character in men and in gentlemen.

The gentleman, in his consideration of others, requires to keep himself under strict self-control. The Romans employed the word *virtus* to designate manliness, courage, and virtue. There can be no *virtus* without conquest over one's self. The selfish desires have to be restrained, and the lower instincts repelled. For the same reason, temperance must be included in the qualities of the gentleman. For temperance tends to keep the head clear, the morals pure, and the body healthful. It has been said that the virtue of prosperity is temperance, and the virtue of adversity is fortitude.

He is the true gentleman—whatever be his station in life—who possesses and displays the gentler graces; who is patiently forbearant; who treats others respectfully; who is sympathetic with the sorrowful and the suffering; who does to all as he would be done by. "In honour preferring one another" is the sacred rule; and it is also the law of good breeding. "Honour all men"; "Be courteous." Courtesy is but paying the debt of self-respect. Speak nothing but kind words, and you will have nothing but kind echoes. St. Francis of Assisi justly said, "Know thou not that Courtesy is of God's own properties, who sendeth His rain and His sunshine upon the just and the unjust, out of His great courtesy: verily Courtesy is the sister of Charity, who banishes hatred and cherishes Love."

The gentleman is just as well as firm. He does well what ought to be done well. He forgives or resents duly, but is never revengeful. He is ready to imitate Socrates in this respect. Some one said to the sage, "May I die

unless I am revenged upon you;" to which his answer was, "May I die if I do not make a friend of you."

The gentleman is gentle, but not fearful. Of high courage—he will help his neighbour at the greatest risk. The line of heroes is not extinct. There are many, of all classes, who will venture their lives to rescue drowning men or women; who will rush into burning flames to save the helpless. The history of modern society amply proves this. There are still founders of charities for the sick and destitute. There are still men ready to sacrifice themselves in peace and war for the help of others.

When the venerable Marshal de Mouchy was led to execution for having protected priests and other devoted victims during the first French Revolution, a voice was heard from the crowd saying, "*Courage, Mouchy! courage, Mouchy!*" The hero turned from those who were by his side and said, "When I was sixty years of age I mounted the breach for my King, and now that I am eighty-four I shall not want the courage to mount the scaffold for my God."

But as fine an instance can be cited from the life and death of a man of our own times—not of a soldier, who is accustomed to brave daily dangers, but of a literary man—a professor of Arabic at Cambridge. Edward Henry Palmer was an extraordinary man. He was a great scholar and linguist. He knew most of the eastern languages, and could talk Romany as well as any gipsy on the road. With all his accomplishments he was a bold, courageous man, yet full of good-humour. All who knew him loved, honoured, and respected him. When the British Expedition to Egypt was planned in 1882, Professor Palmer was employed by our Government to proceed to that country, in conjunction with Captain Gill and Lieutenant Carrington,

for the purpose of purchasing camels and inducing the Bedouins to espouse our cause. While far up the country, near Ayûn Mûsa, the party was attacked by a mixed band of ruffians, and after a few days they were ordered to be murdered, and the whole of them died with courage. "It is a proud memory," says the reviewer of his life, "for scholars to cherish, that when a difficult and dangerous task had to be performed, the one man who could do it was not a soldier but a man of letters; not he of the strong arm, but he of the swift brain and eloquent tongue. In his conduct of the mission, and in his fearless encounter with death, Palmer showed the world that a scholar could also be a hero; and that the man who learnt well, taught well, spoke well, wrote well, did all things that he tried well, could also die well."[1]

In minor things courage is useful. Though one cannot be a hero, one may always be a Man. Courage faces, and eventually overcomes, the difficulties of life. Courage enables us to adhere to good resolutions and to avoid bad ones; to pay our debts and not to live upon the means of others; to speak freely or to be silent where others might be injured; to examine ourselves, and to confess ignorance; to admit that we have been in the wrong; to detect faults, and amend our conduct to the best of our ability. Moral courage can do all these things, though at first sight they may seem full of difficulty. Only the coward is born a slave. The courageous man lives to learn and learns to live. When he does what is right and good, the respect of mankind will follow; if it do not, the man who loyally performs his duty can dispense with the world's praise.

The lady is but the counterpart of the gentleman. She is the sunny ray of life in every good man's home. She is

[1] *Athenæum*, 9th June 1883.

cheerful, tender, and charitable. The word lady (in Anglo-Saxon, *hlæfhige*) originally means bread-giver. She is the donor of daily bread to those about her, and the dispenser of charity to those who seek her help. Love is the source of her power and charity, which (says the apostle) "shall never fail." This is the true element of her noble life; it bears eternal summer in her soul. "Love has the power," says Goethe, "to give in a moment what toil can scarcely reach in an age." "Love itself is knowledge," says St. Gregory; "here is the fountain of all true love, and consequently of all wisdom." The courtesy of the heart proceeds from love, and exhibits itself in the outward behaviour.

> "If thou would fully know what manners mean,
> Then learn from noble women what they teach."

Talleyrand once said of a lovely woman that "beauty was her least charm." It is tenderness, truthfulness, sincerity, honour in her dealings, deference to others, the sense of responsibility, and refined personal habits, which give her the greatest charm. Beauty is not essential; the feeling of feature and form passes away in the ordinary routine of domestic life. But love, gentleness, cheerfulness, are the rivets that bind families and society together.

Even the working woman may exercise ladyhood with dignity. She need not necessarily be well-to-do, still less idle and finely clothed; for such are not the attributes of ladyhood. But the well-ordered, polite, and patiently industrious woman, who attends to the due expenditure of the means entrusted to her, and at the same time sets a diligent and faithful example before her family, has practically more to do, and more graceful faculties to exercise, than her husband who earns the daily bread. Mothers,

more than fathers, have to do with the creation of joyous boyhood and heroic manhood; they are the moulders also of those cultivated qualities which make their girls fitting wives for worthy men. Happy are the men blessed with such wives; blessed are the children born of such mothers.

The law of purity is of universal obligation to men and women alike; but we owe it more to women to maintain the standard of purity than to men. Women are for the most part kept apart from the influences of out-of-doors life; they are not hardened by the struggle, and worry, and competition of the world; and men return to their society for peace, and comfort, and consolation.

As women have the power of elevating and levelling up society, so they have the power of degrading and lowering it down. Theodota boasted to Socrates that she was able to draw off all his disciples to herself. "That may well be," said the sage, "for you lead them down an easy descent; whereas I am for forcing them to mount to virtue—an arduous descent, and unknown to most men." Some two thousand years passed, and human nature having remained the same, Thomas Carlyle, the modern Socrates, made a similar observation: "Surely," he said, "a day is coming when it will be known again what virtue is, in a purity and continence of life."

CHAPTER II

GREAT MEN—GREAT WORKERS

A man knows as much as he works.—St. Francis D'Assisi.

The day is immeasurably long to him who knows not how to value and use it.—Goethe.

Nothing great ever began great.—Joseph de Maistre.

The wordes of Christ make his knightes to be hardie.—Wycliffe.

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise—
That last infirmity of noble minds—
To scorn delights, and live laborious days.—Milton.

Je sais qu'un noble esprit, sans honte et sans crime,
Tirée de son travail un tribut légitime.—Boileau.

THE state of civilisation in which we live is for the most part the result of past labours. All that is great in morals, in intelligence, in art, or in science, has been advanced towards perfection by the workers who have preceded us. Each generation adds its contribution to the products of the past; and the accumulations of knowledge and science are handed down, with interest, to succeeding generations.

Intellectual workers, who "stand the first in worth as in command," form the true aristocracy of labour. They are the capitalists of society—the men of *caput* or head; for it is not money nor station, but brains and work, that confer the highest rank, and constitute the motive power of man-

kind. The highest working power has stood at the head of society in all ages. It may have encountered difficulties and obstructions, been persecuted, condemned, and apparently put to flight and destroyed; yet the great spirits of the dead rule us now. Socrates, Plato, Descartes, and Locke, still live in philosophy; Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Shakespeare, in poetry; Aristotle, Galileo, Newton, and Lavoisier, in science; though their contemporary rulers—tyrants, consuls, presidents, kings, or emperors—have been all but forgotten.

The great men of antiquity, by increasing the realised products of mind, enlarged the heritage of our race. By adding their individual work to the collective labour of preceding generations, they rank among the greatest benefactors of mankind. In some men the impulse to work has become a passion, almost a divine fury. They found the field of labour so large, and life so short, that every moment was seized in order to yield its tribute of result. Work became necessary to their happiness, if not to their existence; it engrossed their whole nature.

It was said of Brousson that he appeared to be at once all action and all study. A man of indefatigable industry, he could never be idle. Bacon found in science a congenial field of labour in "the spent hour-glass of his passing life." Michael Angelo had a positive hunger for work. He said that the use of the mallet was absolutely necessary for his health. He snatched his rest at intervals, and rose in the middle of the night to resume the labours of the day. To his great temperance in living he himself attributed the length of his working life. When no longer able to walk he caused himself to be wheeled into the Belvedere to admire the statues, and even when blind he would take pleasure in examining their proportions with his hands.

Leonardo da Vinci was equally laborious and painstaking. He was draughtsman, painter, sculptor, chemist, mechanic, author, architect, and engineer; a man of the widest scope of intellect, and perhaps the most universal genius that the world has ever known.[1] Titian also continued labouring until far advanced in life. When Vasari visited the painter in his eighty-ninth year, he found him with pencil in hand; and he continued to work for ten more years. It was Canova's greatest grief when he lay at death's door, worn out by labour and years, that he could make no more Venuses—*Dúnque non faro più Venere.*

Vandyke was indefatigable in his application, often finishing a completed portrait in a day. Jackson, the English artist, on one occasion painted five finished portraits in a long summer's day,—though this was for a wager. Teniers the Younger worked so industriously that he used jocularly to say, that to hold all his paintings, though they were of small size, it would be necessary to build a gallery two leagues in length. He continued his labours until beyond his eightieth year, retaining his powers unimpaired to the last.

Sir Joshua Reynolds had the passion for work of the true artist. Until he laid aside his pencil from illness at the age of sixty-six, he was constantly in his painting room, from ten till four daily; "labouring," as he himself said, "as hard as a mechanic working for his bread." When, on one occasion, he was enticed to pay a visit to a friend in the country, he

[1] "If any doubt," says Mr. Hallam, "could be harboured as to the right of Leonardo da Vinci to stand as the first name of the fifteenth century, which is beyond all doubt, but as to his originality in so many discoveries, which probably no one man, especially in such circumstances, has ever made, it must be on an hypothesis, not very untenable, that some parts of physical science had already attained a height which mere books do not record."—*Introduction to The Literature of Europe.*

returned to his work with renewed avidity, feeling as if he had been "kept from his natural food."

Nicholas Poussin said that he felt himself, as he grew old, "becoming more and more inflamed with the desire of surpassing himself and reaching the highest degree of perfection." The true man of genius is never fully satisfied with his own performances. He is often tormented by the feeling of powerlessness to embody in the work of his hands the idea of perfection which he had set up in his mind and imagination. When a bystander was admiring a statue which the Flemish sculptor Duquesnoy had just finished, the artist exclaimed, "Ah, if you could but see the statue that is here" —touching his forehead with his finger.

The same fastidiousness characterises the literary artist. Though Virgil took eleven years to compose his *Æneid*, he was so dissatisfied with it when finished that he wished to commit it to the flames. Voltaire declared that he had not written a single work that satisfied his taste. In the process of committing an idea to paper the subtlest part of it escapes. Oudet says, "Le Dieu fait homme, c'est le Verbe. La pensèe a perdu tout ce qu'elle a de divin, quand elle a été prisonnière dans un tuyau de plume et noyée dans une écritoire." So the portrait-painter often misses the most striking feature in the face, and fails to catch it and transfer it to the canvas.

A celebrated writer has observed that if only such works were published as satisfied their authors, the very greatest would remain unpublished; the actual results usually falling so far short of the ideal conception. The mind moves faster than the pen, and often sees much farther. By the time that the pen can overtake and register the idea, its gist and perfume have escaped beyond reach. The conceived idea may have been bright and clear as sunlight; yet the

written passage may be enveloped in haze. What Pliny remarked of the poet Timanthus—that he felt his ideas were greater than the words in which he conveyed them ; and that even when his art was carried to its farthest limits, his genius went beyond it[1]—is doubtless more or less true of all great artists.

Hence the sedulous and indefatigable efforts of literary artists to give the best possible form of expression to their imaginative ideas. Ariosto wrote his celebrated stanzas descriptive of a tempest in sixteen different ways. Petrarch made forty-five alterations of a single verse. The manuscripts of Tasso were almost illegible by reason of his repeated erasures and corrections. Buffon wrote his *Époques de la Nature* eleven times before he was satisfied with it. Gibbon wrote his *Memoirs* seven times, and left them unfinished. Pascal was not satisfied with one of his *Provincial Letters*, and he did not part with it until he had written it sixteen times over.

Philip Wouvermans was equally fastidious. He was so dissatisfied with his success as a painter that, shortly before his death, at forty-eight, he burned all the studies he had made during his life, for fear lest his son, who had a disposition for art, should be induced by the facilities they might offer to follow the same profession. Yet Wouvermans's pictures are now among the most highly prized of the Dutch school, and fetch large prices. In his own peculiar style he is one of the most masterly painters that ever lived.

A large number of distinguished men have forsaken the occupations in which they had been trained, and embraced others for which they felt they had a greater aptitude. They

[1] "In omnibus ejus operibus, intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur; et cum sit ars summa, ingenium tamen ultra artem est."—*Hist. nat.*, Lib 35, c. 10.

had been put by their parents into some special rut. They felt themselves round men in square holes—discontented, cramped, and worried. There is an old saga of a king and queen to whom a fair son was born. Twelve fairies came to the christening, each with a gift. A noble presence, wisdom, strength, beauty—all were poured upon him, until it seemed that he must exceed all mortal men. Then came the twelfth fairy, with the gift of Discontent; but the angry father turned her and her gift away. And the lad grew apace, a wonder of perfect powers; but, content with their possession, he cared to use them for neither good nor ill. There was no eagerness in him. Good-natured and quiet, he let life slip past him. He did nothing. And at last the king knew that the rejected had been the crowning gift.

Among those who have come out of their ruts—it may have been from discontent, or from the feeling of greater aptitude for other pursuits—have been many distinguished men. Some left the legal profession and went into science, art, or letters. Voltaire found the study of law intolerable; he gave it up and wandered into literature. Petrarch left law for poetry. Moliere spent five years in studying for the bar, and then wrote for the stage. Goldoni forsook the law for the drama. William Pitt was a barrister, and went the Western Circuit twice. Dr. Warburton, the famous prelate, practised for several years as a country attorney. Lord Armstrong did the same at Newcastle, and finally embraced engineering. Sir William Beechy and J. B. Pyne left law for painting. On the contrary, Lord Chancellor Erskine was first a sailor, then a soldier, and eventually found his true place at the bar and on the bench.

Blackstone began his career with poetry; but he parted company with it, and wrote his "Farewell to the Muse" when he began to eat his terms at the Inn of Court which

he frequented; yet Talfourd continued to write poetry while at the Bar, and wrote his drama of *Ion* when in full practice. Cormenin, the French peer and pamphleteer, began his studies with poetry; he afterwards wrote the best technical work on French Administrative Law. We are surprised to learn from Macready's *Reminiscences* that Mr. Cobden, the Corn Law repealer, was a dramatic writer. He once wrote a play called *The Phrenologist*, and took it to a theatrical manager, but it was not accepted.

There are other professions from which men have broken away to follow the impulse of their genius. Count Tilly was brought up as a Jesuit priest, and left the church for the army. Cromwell was a grazing farmer, as well as a brewer, before he emerged into distinction as a soldier. General Jomini, Napoleon's favourite military historian, was in the early part of his life a stockbroker; and Marshal Jourdan was for some time a haberdasher. Pizarro was in early life a pig herd, and Captain Cook a village haberdasher's apprentice. Stanfield the painter, and Douglas Jerrold the author, spent the early part of their life at sea. They served in the same ship. On one occasion, when a play was got up, Stanfield painted the scenery, and Jerrold acted as stage manager. Strange to say, the next time they met on a like occasion was behind the scenes of Drury Lane Theatre, on the occasion of Douglas Jerrold's play of *Black-eyed Susan* being presented, for which Stanfield painted the scenery.

Letters attract the loose fish of all professions. Voudel, the national poet of Holland, was a hosier. Bernardin de St. Pierre, author of *Paul and Virginia* was first a civil engineer, then a military engineer, in France and Russia. He was dismissed for quarrelling with his superiors, and went into letters. Scott, the novelist, and Lockhart, the Quarterly

Reviewer, were both Edinburgh advocates. Hazlitt and Thackeray went from art into letters. Paul de Kock was a banker's clerk in Paris when he first began to write,—as he himself says, "he knew not why." Zechokke, the historian, statesman, and novelist, began life as play-writer to a troop of strolling comedians. The Rev. John Brand, the antiquarian, and William Gifford, the Quarterly Reviewer, were bred shoemakers. Joseph Amos, another antiquarian, was originally a plane-maker, and afterwards a ship-chandler. Speed, the chronicler, Sir John Hawkshaw, the general, Lambert, the mathematician, and Heinrich Young Stilling, the pietist and oculist, were all tailors.

Dr. Brown, the founder of the Brownonian philosophy, was bred a weaver; and "Capability Brown," the architect, a kitchen gardener. Sir Robert Strange, the engraver, led a seafaring life before he took to the burin. Aldrovandus, the naturalist, and Rubens, the painter, both served as pages in early life. Swedenborg, one of the most industrious of authors, was originally a metallurgist, then a professor of mechanics, and next a mining engineer. Picard, the astronomer, laid the foundation of his fame while acting as gardener to the Duc de Crequi. Bowerbank, the naturalist, was for the greater part of his life a distiller; and Herapath, the chemist, was originally a maltster and brewer. These men worked their way from small things to great; they were impelled to greatness by the influence of their genius as well as by the force of their will.

Many have left the profession of arms to embrace science, art, and letters. Dante, Chaucer, Ben Jonson, Sidney, Bunyan, Ignatius Loyola, Descartes, Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Camoens, Niépce, Lamark, and many more, were originally soldiers. Their training in obedience, patience, valour, and duty helped them onward in the labours of

their life, through which they eventually became famous. As Cervantes said, "The lance never blunts the pen." Some went into literature, some into poetry, and others into science.

The man of science, like the man of letters, forgets himself in his pursuit. To him it is close watching, observation, enjoyment. The favourite maxim of Count Lacepede was, "Vivre, c'est veiller." Yet his aristocratic birth and military education did not seem likely to fire him with scientific ardour. The perusal of Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle*, which he read again and again until he almost knew it by heart, attracted his attention to natural history. From this study he diverged into music; then into botany, chemistry, and natural philosophy. He was indeed a many-sided man, and on every side full of intense vitality. He composed an opera for the stage, which was well received. He experimented on electricity, and published a memoir on the subject, as well as on general physics. After the Revolution, he took an active part in public affairs, and was successively President of Paris, Commandant of the National Guard, and Deputy Extraordinary for Agen in the National Assembly, of which he was elected President in 1791. He narrowly escaped with his life during the Reign of Terror; and on emerging from his concealment he was appointed Professor of Zoology at the Jardin des Plantes, where he spent the rest of his life in the diligent pursuit of science. He published a large number of valuable works, the results of close observation and study; and although he rarely allowed himself more than two hours' sleep at a time, he survived to nearly the age of seventy.

Among the most laborious and successful investigators of the laws of the animal economy were Haller and Hunter.

Haller's devotion to science was almost fanatical. Although exceedingly delicate from his childhood, and afflicted with rickets, he studied incessantly. The wonder is, that with his weak health and his hard mental work, he should have lived to nearly seventy. He began publishing the results of his inquiries when only about twenty years old, and in the course of the following fifty years he published upwards of two hundred treatises, principally in illustration of the laws of sensation and irritability, which he may almost be said to have discovered.

John Hunter had many difficulties to encounter, principally arising from his neglected education; yet he was equally laborious and successful. He is entitled to take rank with the very greatest names in science; his museum alone — which contains upwards of 10,000 preparations illustrative of human and comparative anatomy, physiology, pathology, and natural history — being one of the most splendid monuments ever raised to the power of sustained industry and persevering investigation.

M. Louis Pasteur is another instance of extraordinary scientific perseverance. At seventeen he was an usher in the Lyceum of Besançon. His round of duties was monotonous. He did not teach the boys himself, but saw that they learned their lessons, besides keeping order in their dormitory. On Sundays he accompanied them to mass, and on Thursdays he took them out to walk. How did he contrive to become a scientific man? Simply by making use of opportunities. He was permitted to attend the professors' lectures in the higher classes; and the lectures on natural philosophy attracted his attention. Yet he was obliged to limit his scientific studies to the hours of recreation and the holidays. But it so happened that a pupil at the Lyceum had a very fine microscope, which he permitted

Pasteur to examine and use. On Thursdays, when he went out with the pupils, the microscope was taken to the ramparts to examine the insects. This little incident determined his future history. He became an enthusiast in microscopic work. All the rest came to him by degrees, with persevering application and study. He put the angel of death under the microscope, and discovered the laws by which animals and human beings might be guarded from her fatal influence. He investigated the causes of the silk and vine disease, and is now engaged in tracking typhoid fever to its lair, and searching into the nature of hydrophobia.

Most of these men of science have been self-denying. They have not worked for fortune so much as for scientific progress. Spinoza refused the pension offered him by Louis XIV. on condition of dedicating a work to his Majesty. Spinoza preferred to retain his independence and maintain himself by his own labours,—though his occupation was only that of polishing glasses for the opticians. Spinoza was so immersed in his books and studies, that sometimes he did not leave his room for days together. Robert Hooke seldom retired to rest until two or three o'clock in the morning, and occasionally pursued his studies during the entire night. Pater, the Hungarian mathematician, slept only two hours in summer, and four in winter, devoting the greater part of his waking hours to study. Bayle worked at his desk fourteen hours a day for forty years.

Astronomers have been indefatigable workers. Galileo and Copernicus were diligent night-watchers to the end of their long lives. Tycho Brahe scarcely ever left his observatory at Hvën during a period of twenty-one years. Hevelius continued watching the moon and the stars until seventy-six. Flamsteed, a poor country clergyman struggling

with disease, undertook the formidable task of correcting the extensive errors which existed in the astronomical tables of his day, and of cataloguing the fixed stars—a work which occupied him, with his other labours, until his seventy-third year. Indeed Flamsteed may be said to be the founder of practical astronomy in England. Bradley, a man of great sagacity, pronounced by Newton to be "the best astronomer in Europe," continued carefully to observe the heavenly bodies at Greenwich until his seventieth year—his valuable observations, during a period of twenty years, filling no less than thirteen folio volumes. Maskelyne, who assisted Bradley in preparing his tables of refractions, continued his observations until he was close upon fourscore years of age.

From these instances, it would appear that night-watching is not so injurious to health as is usually supposed; and that the patient and unexciting, though laborious, life of astronomers is by no means unfavourable to longevity Thus, William Herschel and his sister Caroline Lucretia exhibited unwearied activity in astronomical observation and calculation down to the close of their long lives; for the one departed at eighty-four years old, and the other at ninety-eight. That the study is absorbing and engrossing may be understood from the case of Delambre, of whom it is related that during the terrible cannonade of Paris by the Allies in 1814, he calmly pursued his astronomical observations, though his house was almost in the centre of the struggle. He was at work all that day for a period of sixteen hours, from eight in the morning until late at night, displaying a degree of self-possession, devotion to study, and indifference to personal danger, which has rarely if ever been equalled.

The last seventeen years of Euler's life were darkened by

blindness, which, however, served only to sweeten his temper and brighten his intellect. Euler's working life extended to over fifty-seven years. His first treatise on the management of ships at sea was written at nineteen, and received with approbation by the French Academy of Sciences. He continued to write and publish memoirs on mechanics, on arithmetic, on astronomy, on the theory of music, and on almost every known branch of theoretical and practical mathematics, until his seventy-sixth year. He lost the sight of one eye at twenty-eight, and of the other at fifty-nine. Notwithstanding his total blindness, he continued his labours; for his powers of memory marvellously increased, even in his old age. In his sixty-fourth year he would have been burnt to death during the conflagration of his house but for the courage of one of his countrymen, who took him up and bore him away in his arms. He lived for twelve more years, working to the end; and then, while playing with his grandchild, he expired suddenly without pain. The number of separate mathematical works which Euler left behind him is almost incredible. It has been calculated that for every fortnight during forty-seven years of his working life, he produced a separate effort of mathematical investigation, digested, arranged, and amplified by corollaries and scholia. Perhaps there is no similar instance of laboriousness in the history of scientific study.

Alexander von Humboldt was a man of almost inexhaustible fertility. He was prodigious in his labours, and enormous in his acquirements. His daily business occupations were so engrossing that he was under the necessity of pursuing his scientific labours during the night or in the early morning, when most other people were asleep. Thirty years before his death, he rose regularly at four during the summer months, and although at an advanced age nature

asserted her rights, and he lay until eight, he continued to consume the midnight oil until almost the close of his life at ninety. Humboldt's knowledge was of a universal character, comprehending more especially all branches of science relating to physical nature. In one of his solemn sentences he prescribed as the three requisites for intelligent travel,—serenity of mind, love for some class of scientific labour, and a pure feeling for the enjoyment which nature in her freedom is ever ready to impart. Indeed, his own life and labours were an illustration of the efficacy of his prescription.

Humboldt, in his youth, underwent a course of study in mining and metallurgy; after which he filled for some time the office of mining superintendent at Bayreuth. He then occupied his spare time in writing scientific articles on various subjects for the German periodicals, besides preparing an important botanical work on the Flora of Friedburg. About the same time he wrote and published his *Investigations on the Muscles and Nerve Fibres*, as well as his Treatise on Subterranean Kinds of Gas. Feeling within himself "a burning desire to travel in distant lands as yet unexplored by Europeans," he resigned his mining appointment, and, in company with Bonpland, set out for South America. There the two naturalists travelled about for five years through extensive tracts of country that had never until then been scientifically observed and described. On Humboldt's return to Europe he settled at Paris, where he occupied twelve years in digesting and systematising the knowledge of facts which he had so laboriously collected. The result was the preparation and publication of several works of large dimensions. He afterwards travelled through Italy, England, Russia, and Siberia, publishing the results of his observations in several valuable works. Finally, when in

his seventy-sixth year, he commenced his *Cosmos*, in which he embodied, as it were in poetic unity, the essence of the accumulated knowledge of his entire life.

William von Humboldt, the elder brother of the traveller, was even more esteemed in Germany than Alexander. He was a statesman and philologist; and equally laborious in his various pursuits. For forty years he enjoyed the reputation of being one of the greatest philosophers and linguists in Europe. "Work," he said, "according to my feeling, is as much of a necessity to a man as eating and sleeping. Even those who do nothing which to a sensible man can be called work, still imagine that they are doing something. The world possesses not a man who is an idler in his own eyes." To a correspondent he said: "That is a very beautiful expression in your last letter, in which you say that you regard life as a casket in which we can lay up all the spiritual treasures that we possess. It is indeed a remarkably happy idea. In fact, man can make of his life what he will, and give as much value to it for himself and others as he has power given him."

Some work for occupation, some for pleasure, some for fortune, some for fame, and some because they cannot help it. Work and occupation are absolutely necessary to their existence. When they become famous, it is unlooked for—often unwelcome. There are many who excel by sheer force of industry; by economising every moment, and turning it to some useful account. Pliny the Elder, when in the country, never relaxed from reading or being read to, except when in the bath. Most of the great chemists, naturalists, and natural philosophers, have been careful economists of time, constantly observing and recording.

John Dalton was a man of this character. Like Newton he would not allow that he had discovered anything, except

through the power of continuous and patient industry which he had brought to bear upon the subject. When complimented on his discoveries at an anniversary meeting of the Medical School at Manchester, he observed: "With regard to myself, I shall only say, seeing so many gentlemen present who are pursuing their studies, that if I have succeeded better than many who surround me, in the different walks of life, it has been chiefly, nay, I may say almost solely, from unwearied assiduity. It is not so much from any superior genius that one man possesses over another, but more from attention to study and perseverance in the objects before them, that some men rise to greater eminence than others. This it is, in my opinion, that makes one man succeed better than another. That is all I shall say concerning myself."

Dalton was constantly observing and comparing. Even after suffering from an attack of paralysis at seventy-one, when sufficiently recovered he continued his observations as indefatigably as ever. In the last night of his life he made the usual entry in the book in which he recorded his meteorological observations, of which he had made more than two hundred thousand during half a century.

Although Dalton was by no means a man of mediocrity, and although his modesty led him to underestimate the value of his labours, still it is unquestionable that men of mediocre powers are occasionally able to accomplish results almost approaching the marvellous, merely by dint of well-applied and long-continued industry. Some of the men who have most powerfully influenced the world, have not been men of genius so much as men of great force of purpose and infinite capacity for work. Amongst such men may be mentioned Martin Luther, Calvin, Ignatius

Loyola, St. Francis Xavier,[1] John Knox, and John Wesley.

Luther was a man of extraordinary power, energy, and perseverance. His life may be said to embody the history of the Reformation in Europe. He was at once linguist, logician, preacher, and politician. All the great movements of his time centred in him. He first translated the New Testament, and then he translated the Old. He flooded the press, then in the infancy of its power, with tracts, treatises, and dissertations, in defence of the liberty of inquiry and examination,—the first great right, he held, of the human understanding. But his capacity of labour was not suddenly born, for industry had been the habit of his life. Speaking of himself at Wittenberg while still a monk, he said: "I had need to have two secretaries to keep up my correspondence; I am conventual concionator, table preacher, director of studies; I am vicar, or in other words eleven priors in one; conservator of the ponds at Litzkau, pleader and assessor at Torgau, Pauline reader and collector of psalms; and add to all these the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil." Work, energy, and determination were the habitual conditions of his life. Nothing could hold him back when he saw the road of duty clear before him. He *would* go to Worms although there were as many devils there as tiles upon the housetops.

By the time that he was thirty-five, Luther had published little; but after that, he was not only the most copious, but the most popular writer in Germany. His first publication was characteristically entitled *Resolutions*—expressive of the energetic determination of the man, whose life was really one long encounter with difficulties and perils. By the

[1] For Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis Xavier see *Self-Help*, pp. 238, 322, 373; and *Duty*, 198, 325.

energy of his style, and the fire and vehemence of his convictions, he carried everything before him. His language adapted itself to every voice and every key,—sometimes brief, terse, and sharp as steel, at others with a mighty stream of words. At the same time he continued full of cheerfulness and good humour, taking infinite pleasure in his wife and family, and cheering their hearts with music; for he played both the guitar and the flute. "Music," he said, "is the art of the prophets; it is the only art which, besides theology, can calm the agitations of the soul and put the devil to flight." But this was not enough; he occupied some of his spare time in turning and clock-making. He could never be idle. "When I am assailed with heavy tribulations," he said, "I rush out among my pigs rather than remain by myself." His robust hunger of work was extraordinary. In three years he wrote and published four hundred and forty-six works, prefixed to many of which were wood engravings after his own design; and during the same time he was in correspondence with many of the leading minds in Europe. Luther stamped the impress of his mind upon his race and nation. He devoted himself to the cause of popular education; and what Germany has become, must in no small degree be attributed to his prescient forethought and his individual influence.

Calvin was no less indefatigable and laborious. He was the divine and dialectician, as Luther was the orator and pamphleteer of the Reformation. Calvin had undergone severe and prolonged mental discipline in his youth, and was accomplished in the learning of the schools. He was only twenty-five when his *Institutes* appeared—a work which exercised a powerful influence during the age in which he lived, as well as on succeeding generations. After the appearance of that work, his labours were incessant. He

preached daily, taught theology to students three days in the week, conducted an extensive correspondence, maintained controversies with theologists in all lands, and devoted the remainder of his spare time to literary work. He travelled from Geneva into Germany and France, but only to renewed toil. From Strasburg he wrote to a friend: "I do not recollect a day in which I was more overwhelmed with business of various sorts. A messenger was waiting for the first portion of my book, so that I had to revise about twenty pages; add to this, that I was to lecture, to preach, to write four letters, to despatch some controversies, and to answer more than ten appellants." Elsewhere he complains of constant interruptions, and looks forward "to the long nights when he shall have some freedom,"—though it was only freedom to do some extra work. For he worked night and day, "in season and out of season," even when labouring under a terrible complication of maladies. It was his extreme temperance and simplicity of living that enabled him to reach fifty-five, at which age he died. During his last illness, when he was scarcely able to breathe, he translated his *Harmony of Moses* from Latin into French, revised the translation of Genesis, and wrote his *Commentary on Joshua*. At the same time he was occupied with the affairs of the various churches, and answered their appeals by word of mouth or by writing, as the various cases required. His friends expostulated and entreated him to spare himself; but his usual reply was that what he had done was as nothing, and that they must allow him to labour at the work which God had set him to do until his latest breath.

Knox, too, was a man of unconquerable energy and indefatigable labour. He was always at work—teaching, preaching, advising, and organising; sometimes when in hiding from his persecutors, and at other times in the open

face of day, braving all dangers. For two years he was a slave on a French galley-boat, where he dragged his chains, and rowed under torture of the whip, with Huguenots as well as criminals. He was at length liberated, though his health had been greatly injured by the cruelty with which he was treated,—yet his mental vigour remained as great as ever. Undauntedly he went from place to place, rousing the intellect of his countrymen. Though he was proclaimed an outlaw and a rebel, they formed a living wall of defence around him. His energy and perseverance, his ability and courage, his intense earnestness and self-denying zeal, carried him through his "good fight" to the triumphant close. Though he lived to the comparatively advanced age of sixty-seven, his biographer says that he "was not so much oppressed with years, as worn out and exhausted by his extraordinary labours of body and anxieties of mind." When laid in his grave behind St. Giles's Cathedral in Edinburgh, Lord Morton, looking down upon his coffin, said, "There lies one who never feared the face of man."[1]

Not less indefatigable and laborious was John Wesley, the founder of the Wesleyan Methodist connection. His life has been cited as an instance of the power of mediocrity, impelled by earnestness and inspired by devotion. Wesley

[1] John Knox's daughter, Elizabeth, married John Welsh (from whom the late Mrs. Carlyle, Jane Welsh, was descended); he was a Presbyterian minister, and was exiled for his opposition to Episcopacy. When her husband was in ill health, and desired to return to Scotland, she sought an interview with King James, who asked her whose daughter she was. She replied, "My father was John Knox."—"Knox and Welsh," said the king; "the devil ne'er made sic a match as that."—"May be," replied Mrs. Welsh; "for we never speired his leave." She then begged that her husband might be permitted to revisit Scotland, and the king said, "He shall if he submit himself to the bishops;" upon which Mrs. Welsh, holding out her apron, said, "Sooner than he should do so, I would kep his head there."

was a most self-denying man, and a continuous worker. Not a moment was left unemployed. He rose at four in the morning, summer and winter, for fifty years, and preached at five in the morning whenever he could find an audience. He travelled from four to five thousand miles a year—teaching, preaching, and organising. In the intervals of his work he found time to read much, and to write voluminously; being at the same time his own printer and bookseller. That he did not, however, place much reliance upon books, as upon working zeal, may be inferred from his remark to one of his disciples, "Beware that you be not swallowed up in books! An ounce of love is worth a pound of knowledge." His capacity for organising and administering affairs was very great; as is sufficiently proved by the vigorous community which he founded during his life, and which has increased so much since his death.

Wesley's knowledge of character was accurate, his will was resolute, and his intellect was clear and decided. But all these characteristics would have availed comparatively little but for his laboriousness, which inspired all who came within reach of his influence and example. At eighty-six, he was still preaching twice, and occasionally thrice, a day. At eighty-seven he wrote: "Blessed be God! I do not slack my labours; I can preach and write still." He was still preaching at eighty-eight—the year in which he died. He himself attributed his length of years and his laborious life to his habitual temperance; for, from his youth up, he had been one of the most abstemious of men. But he possessed—what is of immense importance to the brain-worker—the power, which comparatively few persons possess, of being able to sleep at will; and he acknowledged that he never lost a night's sleep from his childhood.

The mere quantity of work done by some men—apart

from the question of its quality—has been extraordinary. Richard Baxter wrote a hundred and forty-five distinct works, as he himself says, "in the crowd of all my other employments." De Foe was incessantly pamphleteering and book-making. Chalmers gives a list of one hundred and seventy-four distinct works; though several of them are pamphlets, now little known. The nine quarto volumes of De Foe's *Review* were all written with his own hand. Of course most of his writings are forgotten, as must necessarily be the case with the works of every voluminous writer. For the most part, they die with the occasion that gave them birth. Only a few, and those perhaps the least prized at the time of their publication, are destined to reach posterity. *Robinson Crusoe* was offered to bookseller after bookseller, and refused; and yet it is the work above all others by which De Foe is likely to be best known in the future.

There are other multitudinous authors whose works are all but forgotten. Prynne, the author of *Histriomastix*, is one of them. It has been computed that, from the time he reached man's estate to the day of his death, he wrote, compiled, and printed, an average of eight quarto pages daily. What is more, they enjoyed an extraordinary popularity in their day; and publishers were found to risk several hundred pounds upon a single volume. Yet now they are almost unknown, except to book-hunters.

The works of some voluminous authors have been all but unknown even in their own time. When a gentleman casually mentioned to Dr. Campbell, author of *A Political Survey of Great Britain*, that he would like to have a set of his works, he found, to his surprise, that a cart-load of Dr. Campbell's works was at his door next morning; the little bill for which was over seventy pounds! Swedenborg's father, Bishop Snidberg, plied the printing-press almost

incessantly. "I think," he said, "that ten carts could scarcely carry away what I have written and printed at my own expense." His son, Emanuel, was a voluminous author, having published during his lifetime upwards of sixty works, some of which were most elaborate.

The Abbe Prévost wrote more than one hundred and seventy volumes, though the only one that is now read is *Manon Lescaut.* Hans Sachs, the German shoemaker and author, was one of the most laborious of men; for, besides the shoes which he made and mended, he composed and published about two hundred comedies, tragedies, and farces, and about seven hundred fables, allegorical tales in verse, and poems sacred and profane. Moser, a German compiler of the last century, left behind him four hundred and eighty works, of which seventeen are still unedited. Another German, named Kruntz, composed an encyclopedia entirely by himself, which at the date of his death, in 1796, amounted to seventy-two large octavo volumes.

The *quality* of Buffon's works is generally recognised. These, when published complete after his death, occupied thirty-six quarto volumes; but then, to use his own words, "I spent fifty years at my desk." Gibbon occupied fifteen years of laborious work and study in elaborating his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Dr. Robertson, of Edinburgh, was another diligent worker—great in the quality as well as quantity of his works. His *History of Scotland* and his *History of the Reign of Charles V.* were probably his best historical works. His early motto was *Vita sine literis mors est*, a sentiment which adhered to him through life. Sir John Sinclair was an enormous worker. While at college, he made the following arrangement of his time: Sleep, seven hours; dressing, half-an-hour; meals and relaxation, two hours and a half; exercise, two hours; study,

twelve hours,—thus making up the twenty-four hours. He worked continuously until he was eighty-one, his mind remaining clear and firm to the last. In the course of his life he published ten great works in eighteen volumes, and superintended the publication of four other works in one hundred and six volumes, besides issuing not less than three hundred and sixty-seven distinct pamphlets on various subjects.[1]

The habits of study of the late M. Littré were somewhat different from those of Sir John Sinclair. Littré was first a doctor, then a publicist, and lastly a philologist. At the age of sixty-two he began the great work by which he is chiefly known — his *Dictionary of the French Language*. He himself did, almost unaided, what it required the combined knowledge and industry of the members of the French Academy to accomplish in a former generation. Littré's work was not only a dictionary of the French language, but a history of each word, with its nomenclature, signification, pronunciation, etymology, definitions, and synonyms, together with examples of style and language taken from the best authors. Perhaps no such work has ever been accomplished by a single man, and in so short a time; for the work occupied him only about fourteen years. He began in 1863, at the age of sixty-two, and completed the four original volumes—of about three thousand pages, each page containing three columns in small type—by the year 1878. But another volume remained to be done, to complete his work—the Supplement, which contained more than four hundred pages full of additional information.[2]

[1] For sketch of Sir John's life and career, see *Self-Help*, pp. 376-381.

[2] In his last Supplemental Volume (the fifth of his great work) Littré says: "J'étais à peu près parvenu à l'impression de la moitié de ce supplément, lors qu'une grave maladie, m'interrompant, rappela à ma

The manner in which he economised his time while working at his Dictionary was described by himself. He rose at eight, took some work with him downstairs while his room was being put in order. At nine he went upstairs and corrected proofs until breakfast time. From one till three he worked at the *Journal des Savants*, and from three till six at his Dictionary. At six he went down to dinner. It lasted about an hour. Notwithstanding the doctors' rule that one should not recommence work immediately after dinner, Littré constantly violated it, and felt himself nothing the worse. From seven o'clock until three next morning he worked closely at the Dictionary, and then went to bed. He slept as soundly as Wesley did, and rose next morning at eight, to begin his day's work as before. Littré died at the age of eighty.

"To work" was part of Southey's religion. He was perpetually reading, writing, and annotating. His mind was full of great designs, though he did not live to complete them. Yet he contrived during his life to write more than a hundred volumes on various subjects, besides about one hundred and thirty articles for the *Quarterly Review*.

mémoire le vers que Virgile met dans la bouche d'Enée qui, après quelques vain succes de résistance dan la dernière nuit de Troie, s'écrie : *Heu nihil invitis fas quemquam fidere divis.* N'était-ce pas en effet aller contre le gré des dieux que de commencer à soixante-seize ans un travail de quelque durée? Mais ma théorie morale, quant à l'activité (je l'ai exprimée pleusiers fois), est qu'il faut travailler et entreprendre jusqu' au bout, laissant au destin le soin de décider si l'on terminera. Après le vers de Virgile se présenta à mon esprit, dans l'oisiveté de la maladie, La Fontaine et son centenaire disputant contre le mort qui le presse et que lui assure qu'il n'importe à la république qu'il fasse son testament, qu'il pourvoie son neveu et ajoute un aile à sa maison. Je ne suis pas centenaire ; mais je suis fort vieux ; moi aussi j'objectai à la mort. Elle ne trouvait pas non plus qu'il importât beaucoup à la république que je terminasse mon supplément ; mais enfin, elle n'insista pas, la menace s'eloigna et un sursis me fut accordé."

Schiller also, though his career was shorter than that of Southey, and though the bulk of his work was much smaller, accomplished more of an enduring character. He wrote his best works during the last fifteen years of his life, though during that time he scarcely passed a day without suffering from bodily pain.

It is true, a great deal of intellectual labour is merely selfish; not to promote any useful object, to further science, or even to amuse and instruct others, but merely to please one's self. Thus, Mezzofanti mastered nearly every known language, but left not a word behind him wherewith to help the struggling student on his way. Magliabecchi also, the devourer of books—who lived amongst them, took his meals amongst them, slept amongst them, and was never out of Florence more than twice in his life—was another useless brain-worker, who lived exclusively for himself, and did nothing to render the world grateful that such a book-devourer had ever existed.

Calderon and Lope de Vega were among the most fertile of authors,—the one adding at least four hundred dramas, and the other upwards of two thousand, to the dramatic literature of Spain. De Vega wrote with as much ease as great talkers converse, without study and without effort. He was, in fact, an *improvisatore*. He produced because he could not help producing. Scarcely a month or even a week passed without some sonnet, or romance, or comedy, or drama, proceeding from his pen. He himself states, in the eclogue to *Claudeo*, one of his last works, that of his dramas about one hundred had been composed in as many days. During the fifty years of his working life, he produced upwards of twenty millions of verses which are in print, besides twenty-one quarto volumes of miscellaneous works.

The only writer of modern times who can be compared to Lope de Vega for rapidity of production was Sir Walter Scott, who, however, wrote himself out much sooner. When in the full tide of his popularity, he produced the Waverley Novels at the rate of twelve volumes a year. Thus, *Ivanhoe*, *The Monastery*, *The Abbot*, and *Kenilworth*, were produced in little more than twelve months. Indeed, Scott composed faster than he could write; and when unable, through sickness and bodily suffering, to proceed with *The Bride of Lammermoor*, he called to his help the services of Laidlaw and John Ballantyne as his amanuenses. They had often to call upon him to stop to enable them to note down his narrative. Laidlaw beseeched him to stop dictating, while his audible suffering filled any pause. "Nay, Willie," said Scott, "only see that the doors are fast. As to giving over work, that can only be when I am in woollen." John Ballantyne usually had a dozen of pens ready made, before he seated himself opposite the sofa on which Scott lay, and began his work. Though Scott often turned himself on his pillow with a groan of torment, he usually continued the sentence in the same breath. But when any dialogue of peculiar animation was in progress, the spirit seemed to triumph over matter; and Scott rose from his couch and walked up and down the room, raising and lowering his voice, as if acting the part.

It was in this fashion that Scott produced by far the greater portion of *The Bride of Lammermoor*. It is a remarkable circumstance connected with the production of this, perhaps the most dramatic and tragic of Scott's novels, that when the work was put into his hands after his recovery, he did not recollect one single incident, character, or conversation it contained! The story had been rooted in his mind from childhood; but the whole of the working out of

the drama, in its marvellous detail, had been accomplished as if he had been asleep; and when finally read out, it came upon him like a half-remembered dream. It may, however, be added that Scott, at the time of its composition, was under the influence of henbane and opium, both of which he took in considerable quantities for the purpose of allaying the painful cramp in his stomach, and that he was therefore in an altogether abnormal state of nervism and exaltation.

Scott was under great pressure when he wrote *The Life of Napoleon*. That voluminous but by no means enduring work was written for the special purpose of paying his debts. It was composed in the midst of pain, sorrow, and ruin. The nine volumes were written rapidly, in less than twelve months. At the same time, he was proceeding with the novel of *Woodstock*, taking refuge in the composition of the latter as a relief and relaxation from drearier labour. Scott produced in all seventy-four volumes of novels, twenty-one volumes of poetry, and about thirty volumes of history and biography, besides a large number of articles for the *Quarterly Review* and other periodicals. One hundred and four of these volumes were produced between 1814 and 1831, the principal working years of his life, or at the rate of about six volumes a year. The mere mechanical work of writing them out was immense. But it should be remembered that Scott was not wholly an author. He was sheriff of his county, a clerk of the Court of Session, partner in a printing and publishing house, an almost universal correspondent with friends in all parts of the world, and a country squire exercising splendid hospitality. He was a most brave, industrious, excellent, and noble gentleman.

As we have said, it is not the *quantity* but the *quality* of the work that is most valued. Some men have bestowed great labour upon works which, when finished, were com-

pressed within a very small compass. Thus Butler's *Analogy* occupied him twenty years, and it is contained within a small volume. But he wrote and re-wrote various parts of it, and studied each word and phrase until it expressed precisely his meaning, and no more. It is simply a condensed epitome of thought and argument.

It took Montesquieu twenty-five years to compose his *Esprit de Lois*, though it may be read in an hour. The author said to a friend, "the preparation of it has whitened my hair." Hervey's treatise, *Exercitatio de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis*, in which he demonstrated the circulation of the blood, cost him twenty-six years' labour. Swammerdam, the naturalist, was occupied for eight years in the preparation of his last published work, *The Anatomy of the Day Fly*. Ariosto was engaged for ten years in composing his *Orlando Furioso*, of which only a hundred copies of the first edition were printed and sold to a bookseller at about fifteenpence a copy.

Abraham Tucker made numerous sketches of his *Light of Nature* before he eventually decided upon the plan and details of the work, after which he wrote out and transcribed the whole copy twice over with his own hand. The work, which was in seven volumes octavo, occupied him about eighteen years. Though little read now, *The Light of Nature* was a favourite book with Dr. Paley and Sir James Mackintosh. Tucker has been called "the metaphysical Montaigne." Sir James Mackintosh said of him that he wrote to please himself more than the public, and that he had too little regard for his readers either to sacrifice his sincerity to them, or to curb his prolixity, repetition, and egotism, from the fear of fatiguing them. Hence the book now rests on the book-shelves with so many dead and half-forgotten volumes.

While some authors, like Lope de Vega and Scott, throw off their works with ease and rapidity, others, like Virgil, Tasso, Petrarch, Pascal, and Buffon, write and re-write, and are never satisfied with the form in which their ideas are cast. Books, however,—especially prose books,—will be found to live rather because of what they contain than because of the form in which they are presented. Mere style never yet saved a book, and perhaps never will. And yet style is greatly to be esteemed. Authors who have thought too much of style have rarely survived their own day, while those who have forgotten themselves in their subject for the most part survive.

It is no doubt true that many works written rapidly and easily prove worthless and die, but so also do others written elaborately and carefully. Of Lope de Vega's enormous number of works, few are now remembered, and only two or three of his plays keep possession of the stage. It was the same with the works of the Italian poet Leonida, who wrote his poems ten times over to give them the perfection he intended; as well as of Piero Maffei, who confined himself to the careful composition of not more than fifteen lines a day; and of Claude Vaugelas, who took thirty years to translate Quintus Curtius, and was never done retouching and correcting it. But who reads these books now?

Rogers took fourteen years to compose his *Italy*. But how many readers would now possess the book but for the exquisite illustrations of Turner? It was said of Rogers's works that they "would have been dished but for the plates." Rogers told Babbage that he had never written more than four, or at least six lines of verse, in one day, in his life. Babbage, however, in his *Life of a Philosopher*, mentions a case in which Rogers showed that he possessed a very active imagination. While at dinner with a friend,

the poet sat with his back to a window consisting of a single sheet of glass. Looking back, he fancied it to be open, and thereupon immediately caught cold!

Inspired men certainly compose with a rapidity and rapture unknown to the ordinary worker. Alfieri tells us that he composed the first act of *Alcestes* with fury and with floods of tears. Great works of genius are indeed rarely produced slowly. When the poet stays to polish and overlay his idea with labour, the perfume of the conception escapes. The "fit" goes, and the train of thought is lost.

Shakespeare, Petrarch, Dante, Scott, Goethe, Shelley, all wrote with rapidity, though Petrarch was a great polisher. Goethe would not allow a thought to escape, but immediately committed it to paper. One day, when honoured with a visit from an exalted monarch, Goethe slipped away for a few minutes in the midst of an interesting conversation, and went into another room to write down an idea which had just struck him for his *Faust*. Pope would not permit an idea to escape him, even in the night. He would get up, light his candle, and note it down. Southey, writing to Sir Walter Scott, said, "Believe me, Scott, no man of real genius was ever a puritanical stickler for correctness, or fastidious about any faults except his own. The best artists, both in poetry and painting, have produced the most."

At the same time, it is not necessary to attempt the *tour de force* of the author mentioned by Horace, who could compose two hundred verses while standing on one leg! It is not necessary to add that none of the one-leg verses survived. Indeed, the easy composing of that which is worth reading can only be arrived at by preparation and study. Though it may seem spontaneous, it is nevertheless the result of previous labour. When a plutocrat asked Horace

Vernet to do a little thing for him in pencil for his album, Vernet did the little thing and asked 1000 francs for it. "But it took you only five minutes to draw," said the man of wealth. "Yes," said Vernet, "but it took me thirty years to learn how to do it in five minutes."

Erasmus composed his *Praise of Folly* (*Encomium Moriae*) in seven days; but it embodied the results of the studies of his entire life. "And herein truly," says Carlyle, speaking of Scott, "lies the secret of the matter; such swiftness of mere writing, after due energy of preparation, is doubtless the right method; the hot furnace having long worked and simmered, let the pure gold flow out at one gush."

Although Chapman boasted that he had translated Homer's twelve books in only fifteen weeks, the translation might have been all the better had more time been taken with it. The finishing touches which give the grace and charm to poetic thoughts, can only be matured by patience and leisure. The happy turn of idea comes after long meditation, enabling it to take possession of the human mind and memory, and live there through all time.

Smollett ran a race with Hume in his *History of England;* he wrote four quarto volumes in fourteen months. As Johnson read, "tearing the bowels out of a book," so he wrote, with immense rapidity. One of his best productions, *The Life of Savage*, was written, according to his own account, in thirty-six hours; and his *Vanity of Human Wishes*, which contained about twelve pages of verse, was written in a day. *Rasselas* was composed during the evenings of one week, for the purpose of paying the expenses of his mother's funeral; and it was sent to the press as soon as written. The elder Dumas was one of the most rapid of modern writers. He wrote the first four volumes of *Monte Christo* in sixteen days, in a fisherman's cottage at

Trouville, with his colleague M. Magnet sitting opposite him at the same table; and it was perhaps the most popular work that he ever wrote.

The great musical composers have, for the most part, been indefatigable workers. The elder Scarlatti produced no less than two hundred masses, a hundred operas, and three thousand cantatas. Haydn, besides his six oratorios, two of which were *The Creation* and *The Seasons*, composed a hundred and six symphonies, two hundred concertos, eighty-three violin quartettes, sixty pianoforte sonatas, fifteen masses, fourteen operas, sixty-two canzonets, besides a Te Deum and a Stabat Mater. Indeed, it might almost be said that some of his best works were written the fastest. Handel was a constant and rapid worker; even after he had been partially disabled by paralysis. He had a favourite harpsichord, every key of which, by incessant practice, was hollowed out like the bowl of a spoon. When the fury of composition was on him, he wrote with extraordinary vehemence. *The Messiah* was executed in twenty-three days, and the *Israel in Egypt* in twenty-seven. In one year he composed *Saul*, *Israel*, *Dryden's Ode*, *Jupiter in Argos*, and his Twelve Grand Sonatas—all first-rate works.

But Mozart was still more rapid. His *Nozze de Figaro* was composed within a month, the grand finale of the second act occupying him two nights and a day, during which he wrote without intermission. *Don Giovanni* was composed in six weeks, though the whole subject had already been thoroughly digested in Mozart's mind. The overture was not begun until the night previous to that fixed for the first performance of the opera. He began it about midnight, and it was ready in the morning. The sheets were then handed to the copyists, but their work was so heavy and prolonged, that in the evening, when the

hour for the commencement of the performance had arrived, the audience were kept waiting three quarters of an hour for the overture. At last the sheets were hurriedly brought into the orchestra covered with sand, and the music was at once played at sight, with immense applause. *Zauberflöte* also was written with extraordinary rapidity; though Mozart's constitution was already breaking up, through irregularities and overwork. He worked at the opera night and day, and finished it in a few weeks. He afterwards composed his *Clemenza di Tito* with equal despatch, commencing it while travelling, and finishing it in about eighteen days. His last work was the *Requiem*, which he wrote upon his death-bed,—working upon it almost to his latest breath.[1]

It is also worthy of remark that Mozart's masterpieces were, for the most part, produced amidst a tumult of arrests, demands of duns, and petty cares and annoyances. Handel's great works were written amidst rage, vexation, and mortification; for his temper was furious and his health unsettled after his first heavy attack of palsy. Weber's liveliest strains were conceived and worked out amidst the annoyances of petty cares; and the most powerful ideas in *Oberon*—like those of Scott in the *Bride of Lammermoor*—while he was almost prostrate with pain and suffering. In these cases, the spirit dominated over the body, and bade defiance to the torments and miseries which assailed it.

It is not, however, through the preparatory efforts of labour and talent, however persevering, that such works are conceived and perfected, but through the influence of what we call Genius. It is difficult to define the word. It may be talent intensified, or the energising of the imagination; but it is something more. Genius brings dead things to life. Hazlitt says it is the first impulse of genius to create what

[1] Holmes, *Life of Mozart.*

never existed before. Ruskin calls it the power of penetration into "the root and deep places of the subject." Mill defines it as "the gift of seeing truths of a greater depth than the world can penetrate." Coleridge said, it is "the faculty of growth"; John Foster believed it to be "the power of lighting one's own fire"; and Flourens described it as "the highest development of reason in a man." It was said of the genius of Molière that it was common sense sharpened until it shone.

But genius is more than this. It is intense energy; it is a man's *self*, something distinctive, and his own. Genius is more than intellect: it is inspired instinct.[1]

[1] Hear what a distinguished physiologist, Dr. John Fletcher of Edinburgh, said of the relations of instinct with genius:—"The more nearly man, in attaining perfection in his works, is actuated in their production by Instinct, the greater is his Genius; the more by reason and volition, the greater is his Talent. . . . It is this consciousness of the existence in us of a power superior to any over which we have control, which has led poets in all ages to invoke Apollo and the Muses to inspire their verse—in other words, to call upon Passion or Instinct to supersede Reason; and that some such instinctive power at once absorbed the mind, and actuated the mighty hand of a Michael Angelo and a Raphael, and excited, not only the conceptions, but the merely physical movements destined to develop works on which ages were to ponder with admiration and delight, is unquestionable.

It is true, the Instinct thus running riot over the Reason is, in man, very liable to become morbid, and even to terminate in confirmed idiotcy or insanity; and it is this constant subserviency of many of the great actions of a great genius, and of a fatuous or furious person to the same blind impulse, which produces that close alliance of the sublime and the ridiculous, the lofty and the bombastic,—as well in their works as in their thoughts and words, which has furnished, in every age, so fertile a theme of animadversion. . . . It is a similar morbid preponderance of Instinct over Reason which leads man into every description of intemperance, although this results more frequently from the Reason being too weak, as in the case of ordinary debauchees, than from the Instinct being too strong, as in that of men of genius, who are unhappily so often characterised by this infirmity."—*Rudiments of Physiology*. Edinburgh, 1836.

There have been heaven-born generals, musicians, artists, and poets. *Poeta nascitur, not fit*, is a well-known maxim. Ordinary men are imitators: men of genius are creators. Genius begins where rules end. Patience and labour seek a way: genius finds one. Intellect is but a tool: genius is an inspiration, a gift, an afflatus. Hence men in past ages regarded it as something supernatural and divine. The man of genius was the seer, the priest, the hero.

Michael Angelo saw with his mind's eye, without the help of either model or drawing, the statue hidden in the block of marble; he seized his chisel, tore away the cerements, and let out the god, to the wonder and admiration of all time. It is said that Paisiello, in his fits of composition, buried himself under the bed-clothes, trying to banish from his memory all the rules and precepts of his art, and giving vent to his feelings in the exclamation, "Holy mother! grant me the grace to make me forget that I am a musician!" And Palestrina, in the MS. of his noble Mass of Pope Marcellus—considered the very perfection of art—wrote the words, "Domine, illumine oculos meos."

According to Avicenna, all things obey a human soul elevated into ecstasy. With concentrated attention the power of the mind becomes intense,—as warm rays thrown into a concave mirror become concentrated in one single point of heat. The force of a man's intelligence is equal to the force of his concentration. And concentration means exaltation, ecstasy, inspiration. It is this which mainly constitutes the difference between men and the results which they achieve—in poetry, oratory, science, invention, or art. This is the turning point of genius,—the point at which Archimedes arrived, when he ran half-clad through the streets of Syracuse during the siege, crying, "I have found it! I have found it!"—the passers-by thinking that he was mad

Thus Newton achieved his great discovery by "always thinking to it,"—that is, by his intense power of concentration of intellect on the subject of his search.

When men have been trained to a particular calling in life, they are put into a groove from which it is very difficult to escape. Their mind and habits become formed, their destiny seems to be shaped, and they are bound in trammels from which it seems next to impossible to escape. But the bent of a strong genius is not to be restrained. It bursts through the crust of circumstances; forcing itself up through the obstructions of difficulty, drudgery, and poverty. Thus Hans Sachs rose above cobbling, John Stowe above tailoring, Arkwright above barbering, Claude Lorraine above pastry cooking, Bunyan above tinkering, Molière above upholstery, Keats above drugs, and most great men above the obstructions which seemed, at first sight, to render their distinction improbable.

Rabelais was a physician, and Locke a surgeon; but the one became a great wit and satirist, and the other a distinguished philosopher. Galvani was a doctor in large practice, when he made the discovery identified with his name, and to the prosecution of which he subsequently devoted his life. Schiller and Smollett were surgeons—the one to the Duke of Würtemberg's grenadier batallion, the other (as surgeon's mate) to a ship of the line, the life on board of which he describes in *Roderick Random.* Mungo Park, the traveller; Crabbe, the poet; Goldsmith, author of *The Vicar of Wakefield;* Farini, the Italian statesman; Rickman, the English architect; Sir Thomas Browne, Sir Richard Blackmore, Wollcott, Akenside, and Keats,—all belonged to the same profession. Mr. Haden, while doing his finest work as an etcher, was successfully conducting a large London practice; and St. Beauve was as skilful with his dissecting knife as an

anatomist, as he afterwards was with his dissecting pen as a critic.

Our greatest physiologist has said, "No man was ever a great man that wanted to be one." Indeed, men of the greatest genius are often unconscious. Such appears to have been the case with Shakespeare, who was content to appear in a subordinate part at the Globe Theatre, in Ben Jonson's tragedy of *Sejanus*, and to commit to memory the heavy blank verses of his friend. Pope says of Shakespeare, that "he grew immortal in his own despite." In the beginning of life especially, the possessor of genius is no more conscious of it than others are. It is occasionally brought out by repeated trials, and sometimes by repeated failures. Thus Newton was led by his failures in judicial astrology to the study of natural philosophy and astronomy, by the pursuit of which his fame was eventually established. Yet Newton was, like Shakespeare, always indifferent to fame. Even so great a sceptic as Voltaire has said of Newton, that if the whole human race could be assembled from the creation to his time, in the gradation of genius, Isaac Newton would stand at their head.

Though genius is sometimes a law unto itself, it more frequently accomplishes its objects by the labour which conquers all things. And the very capacity to labour intently and intensely is of itself of the nature of genius. It has even been said that the great difference between men consists less in their original endowment than in their power of continuous and persevering labour. There must, however, be the spark of creative power, otherwise labour by itself could avail little. Men of genius are not only laborious and persevering, but they are for the most part enthusiasts. In the case of discoveries and inventions nothing can be done without enthusiasm. The man of genius is usually

before his age. He is not only unrecognised by his contemporaries, but he is often thwarted and baffled by them. This has been the case in the discovery of the law of universal gravitation, of the undulatory theory of light, of the application of steam for the purposes of labour and locomotion, and of the principle of evolution and new laws of growth and development in the world about us.

Genius, however, is not always so unconscious, as in the cases of Shakespeare and Newton. Some have not only recognised but asserted their own genius before the world recognised it. "When I am dead," said the great physiologist, "you will not soon meet with another John Hunter." Dante claimed a first place among poets, and confidently predicted his own fame. Kepler believed that the country to which he belonged would yet glory in him, and that his discoveries would be verified by succeeding ages. Of one of his books he says, "Whether it be read by posterity or by my contemporaries is of no consequence; it may well wait for a reader during our century, when God Himself, during six thousand years, has not sent an observer like myself." Once, in the society of Conte and Vendôme, Voltaire exclaimed, "We are all kings, princes, or poets." Mirabeau claimed kinship with all genius. When he spoke of Admiral Coligny, he always took care to add, "and who (by parenthesis) was my cousin."

Goethe had the frankness to confess that he never accepted any praise that he had not already bestowed upon himself. Wordsworth anticipated with confidence the judgment of posterity on his poems, and held that it would yet be acknowledged that he had exerted his faculty of imagination upon the worthiest objects. And without the desire for appreciative sympathy from the minds of posterity, it not from the minds of contemporaries, men of imagination

might not have possessed the necessary impulse to utter their thoughts in poetry.

Yet great men, to a certain extent, are but the product and offspring of their age. They are made and moulded by the times in which they live. While they influence, they are also influenced by their contemporaries. Their family surroundings, their education and upbringing, the political and religious opinion of their period, act and react upon their nature, give a direction to their character, and evoke their best powers. Hence great men, influenced by like causes, so often appear in so many groups or constellations. Such a group appeared in Greece in the time of Pericles; in Rome during the Augustan age; in Spaind uring the reign of Philip II.; and in France at the beginning of that of Louis XIV. The Elizabethan reign was emphatically the age of great Englishmen—of Shakespeare, Spencer, Bacon, Jonson, Hooker, Sidney, Raleigh, Hawkins, Drake, and Cecil. In the reign of Charles I. another group of great names occur—Jeremy Taylor, Clarendon, Falkland, Harvey, Milton, Hampden, Pym, Vane, Cromwell, Blake, and others.

In Italy, a constellation of great artists appeared almost simultaneously—Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Perugino, Raphael, Sebastian del Piombo, Titian, Correggio, Luini, and others; while in modern Germany a brilliant constellation of great poets and critics appeared—Klopstock, Goethe, Lessing, Wieland, Schiller, Schlegel, Fichte, Schelling, Richter, Herder, and the Humboldts. It may be mentioned that Alexander Humboldt first saw the light in 1769. The same year witnessed the birth of Napoleon I., Wellington, Mehemet Ali, Cuvier, Castlereagh, Brunel the elder; and in the same year, the first steam-carriage was made by Cugnot, the Frenchman, the patent for the spinning-jenny was taken out by Arkwright, the Englishman.

and the patent for the condensing steam-engine by James Watt, the Scotchman.

In Scotland, also, there was an important group which, besides James Watt, included Adam Smith, Joseph Black, Robison, Hume, Fraser-Tytler, and Dugald Stewart. Watt was only one of a group of great contemporary inventors, who were in a great measure evoked by the wants of their age. Yet they were not professional inventors, nor even engineers. Watt was a mathematical instrument-maker; Arkwright was a barber; Cartwright, the inventor of the power-loom, was a clergyman. Bell, who afterwards invented the reaping-machine, was a Scotch minister; Armstrong, inventor of the hydraulic engine, was a solicitor; and Wheatstone, inventor of the electric telegraph, was a maker of musical instruments. These great men eventually found their true vocation, and bore up right manfully through all their trials and difficulties.

Patience and perseverance are as much required in the conduct of public and philanthropic affairs as in the preparation of books or the invention of machines. Patience is not passive; on the contrary, it is active, sometimes it is concentrated strength. The great statesmen have, for the most part, been patient and persevering. Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Webster, Lincoln, and other American statesmen, were distinguished for their laboriousness. Webster declared that he did not know how the bread of idleness tasted. "I have worked," he said to a friend, "for more than twelve hours a day for fifty years on an average."

It has been the same with our own statesmen,—the men of Elizabeth's time, and the men of George the Third's and Victoria's time, as well as with the eminent statesmen of other lands, especially of Germany and Italy; but space prevents our dwelling upon their remarkable laboriousness.

CHAPTER III

GREAT YOUNG MEN

Boast not the titles of your ancestors
Brave youths! they're their possessions, none of yours;
When your own virtues equall'd have their names,
'Twill be but fair to lean upon their fames,
For they are strong supporters; but till then
The greatest are but growing gentlemen.—BEN JONSON.

The youth of a nation are the trustees of posterity. . . . The history of heroes is the history of youth.—LORD BEACONSFIELD.

A man that is Young in years, may be Old in hours, if he have lost no time. But that happeneth rarely. Generally, Youth is like the first cogitations, not so wise as the second. For there is a youth in thoughts as well as in ages. And yet the Invention of Young Men is more lively than that of Old. And imaginations stream into their minds better, and, as it were, more divinely.—BACON.

THE world is for the most part young. Children, boys and girls, young men and women, constitute the greater portion of society. Hence the importance we attach to education. Youth is the time of growth and development, of activity and vivacity, of imagination and impulse. The seeds of virtue sown in youth grow into good words and deeds, and eventually ripen into habits. Where the mind and heart have not been duly cultivated in youth, one may look forward to the approach of manhood with dismay, if not despair. Southey says: "Live as long as you may, the first twenty years are the longest half of your life; they appear so while they are passing; they seem to

have been so when we look back upon them; and they take up more room in our memory than all the years that succeed them."

Each human being contains the ideal of a perfect man, according to the type in which the Creator has fashioned him; just as the block of marble contains the image of an Apollo, to be fashioned by the sculptor into a perfect statue. It is the aim of education to develop the germs of man's better nature, as it is the aim of the sculptor to bring forth the statue from the block of marble.

Education begins and ends with life. In this respect it differs from the work of the sculptor. There is no solstice in human development. The body may remain the same in form and features, but the mind is constantly changing. Thoughts, desires, and tastes change by insensible gradations from year to year; and it is, or ought to be, the object of life and education to evolve the best forms of being. We know but little of the circumstances which determine the growth of the intellect, still less of those which influence the heart. Yet the lineaments of character usually display themselves early. An act of will, an expression of taste, even an eager look, will sometimes raise a corner of the veil which conceals the young mind, and furnishes a glimpse of the future man. At the same time knowledge, and the love of knowledge, are not necessarily accompanied by pure taste, good habits, or the social virtues which are essential to the formation of a lofty character.

There is, however, no precise and absolute law in the matter. A well-known bishop has said that "little hearts and large brains are produced by many forms of education." At the same time, the conscientious cultivation of the intellect is a duty which all owe to themselves as well as to society. It is usually by waiting long and working diligently, by

patient continuance in well-doing, that we can hope to achieve any permanent advantage. The head ought always to be near the heart to enable the greatest intellectual powers to work with wholesome effect. "Truly," says Emerson, "the life of man is the true romance, which, when valiantly conducted, will yield the imagination a higher joy than any fiction."

The difference of age at which men display the ability of thinking, and attain maturity of intellect, and even of imagination, is very remarkable. "There be some," said Bacon, "who have an over-early ripeness in their years, which fadeth betimes;" corresponding with the words of Quintilian: "Inanibus artistis ante messem flavescunt." This is true of precocious children, who are sometimes found marvellous in their knowledge when young and immature, but of whom nothing is heard when they arrive at maturity. Precocity is often but a disease—the excitement of a fine nervous organisation, or the over-activity of a delicate brain. The boy Heinecken of Lubeck learned the greater part of the Old and New Testament in his second year; he could speak Latin and French in his third year; he studied religion and the history of the Church in his fourth year; and finally, being excitable and sickly, he fell ill and died in his fifth year. Of this poor child it might be said, in Bacon's words, that "Phaeton's car went but a day."

Parents and teachers sometimes forget that the proper function of a child is *to grow;* that the brain cannot, in early years, be overworked without serious injury to the physical health; that the body—muscles, lungs, and stomach—must first have its soundness established; and that the brain is one of the last organs to come to maturity. Indeed, in early life, digestion is of greater importance than thinking; exercise is necessary for mental culture; and discipline is better

than knowledge. Many are the cases of precocious children who bloom only to wither, and run their little course in a few short years. The strain upon their nervous system is more than their physical constitution can bear, and they perish almost as soon as they have begun to live. Boys and girls are at present too much occupied in sitting, learning, studying, and reciting. Their brain is overworked; their body is underworked. Hence headaches, restlessness, irritability, and eventually debility and disease.

Young people are not only deprived of the proper use of their hands and fingers, but of the proper use of their eyes; and the rising generation is growing up useless-handed as well as short-sighted. Education does not mean stuffing a lot of matter into the brain, but educing, or bringing out, the intellect and character. The mind can be best informed by teaching boys and girls how to use their powers; which necessarily includes the exercise of the physical system. If this were more attended to, there would be fewer complaints of the over-pressure of children's brains.

There are, however, some children less fragile—especially boys—who resist the perilous influences of over-excitement, and live to fulfil the promises of their youth. This is especially observed in the case of great musicians. But here there is no over-pressure; for the art comes naturally, and causes only pleasant excitement. This was especially the case with the great master, Handel, who composed a set of Sonatas when only ten years old. His father, a doctor, destined him for the profession of law, and forbade him to touch a musical instrument. He even avoided sending the boy to a public school, for there he would be taught the gamut. But young Handel's passion for music could not be restrained. He found means to procure a dumb spinet,

concealed it in a garret, and went to practise upon the mute instrument while the household were asleep. The Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels at length became acquainted with the boy's passion, and interceded with his father. It was only then that he was permitted to follow the bent of his genius. In his fourteenth year, Handel played in public; in his sixteenth year, he set the drama of *Almeria* to music; in the following year, he produced *Florinda* and *Nerone*. While at Florence, in his twenty-first year, he composed his first opera, *Rodrigo;* and at London, in his twenty-sixth year, he produced his famous opera of *Rinaldo*. He continued to produce his works—operas and oratorios; and in 1741, when in his fifty-seventh year, he composed his great work, *The Messiah*, in the space of only twenty-three days. In the case of Handel, the precocity of the boy exercised no detrimental influence upon the compositions of the man; for his very greatest works were produced late in life, between his fifty-fourth and sixty-seventh year.

Haydn was almost as precocious a musician as Handel, having composed a mass at thirteen; yet the offsprings of his finest genius were his latest compositions, after he had become a sexagenarian. The *Creation*, probably his greatest work, was composed when he was sixty-five. John Sebastian Bach had almost as many difficulties to encounter as Handel in acquiring a knowledge of music. His elder brother, John Christopher, the organist, was jealous of him, and hid away a volume containing a collection of pieces by the best harpsichord composers. But Sebastian found the book in a cupboard, where it had been locked up; carried it to his room; sat up at night to copy it—without a candle—by the light only of the summer night, and sometimes of the moon. His brother at last discovered the secret work, and cruelly carried away both book and copy. But no difficulties or

obstructions could resist the force of the boy's genius. At eighteen we find him court musician at Weimar; and from that time his progress was rapid. He had only one rival as an organ-player, and that was Handel.

But of all the musical prodigies, the greatest was Mozart. He seems to have played apparently by intuition. At four years old he composed tunes before he could write. Two years later he wrote a concerto for the clavier. At twelve he composed his first opera, *La Finta Semplice.* Even at this early age he could not find his equal on the harpsichord. The professors of Europe stood aghast at a boy who improvised fugues on a given theme, and then took a ride-a-cock-horse round the room on his father's stick. Mozart was a show-boy, and was taken by his father for exhibition in the principal cities of Europe, where he was seen in his little puce-brown coat, velvet hose, buckled shoes, and long flowing curly hair tied behind. His father made a good deal of money out of the boy's genius. Regardless of his health, which was extremely delicate, he fed him with excitement. Yet the boy was full of uproarious merriment when well. Though he was a master in music, he was a child in everything else. His opera of *Mithridates*, composed at fourteen, was performed twenty times in succession; and, three years later, his *Lucia Silla* had twenty-six successive representations. These were followed by other great works —the *Idomeneo*, written at twenty-five; the *Figaro*, at thirty; the *Don Giovanni*, at thirty-one; the *Clemenza di Tito* and the *Zauberflöte*, at thirty-five; and the *Requiem*, at thirty-six. He wrote the last work on his death-bed. He died in 1792, worn out by hard, or rather by irregular work and excessive excitement. The composer of the *Requiem* left barely enough to bury him.

Beethoven was not so precocious as either Handel or

Mozart. His music was, in a measure, thrashed into him by his father, who wished to make him a prodigy. Young Beethoven performed in public, and composed three sonatas when only thirteen; though it was not until after he had reached his twenty-first year that he began to produce the great works on which his fame rests.

Most of the other great German composers gave early signs of their musical genius. Winter played in the King of Bavaria's band at ten years old; he produced his first opera, *Bellerophon*, at twenty-five. Weber, though a scapegrace of a boy, had a marvellous capacity for music. His first six fugues were published at Salzburg when he was only twelve years old. His first opera, *Das Waldmädchen*, was performed at Vienna, Prague, and St. Petersburg when he was fourteen; and he composed masses, sonatas, violin trios, songs, and other works, until in his thirty-sixth year he produced his opera of *Der Freischütz*, which raised his reputation to the greatest height. Mendelssohn tried to play almost before he had learned to speak. He wrote three quartettes for the piano, violin, and violoncello before he was twelve years old. His first opera, *The Wedding of Comacho*, was produced in his sixteenth year, his sonata in B Flat at eighteen, his *Midsummer Night's Dream* before he was twenty, his Reformation Symphony at twenty-two, and all his other great works by the time that he reached his thirty-eighth year, when he died. Meyerbeer was another musical prodigy. He was an excellent pianist at nine. He began to compose at ten, and at eighteen his first dramatic piece, *Jephtha's Daughter*, was publicly performed at Munich; but it was not until he had reached his thirty-seventh year that he produced his great work, *Robert le Diable*, which secured for him a world-wide reputation.

In Carlyle's *Life of Schiller* we find a curious account of

Daniel Schubart, a musician, poet, and preacher. He was "everything by turns, and nothing long." His life was a series of violent fits,—of study, idleness, and debauchery. Yet he was a man of extraordinary powers,—an excellent musician, a great preacher, an able newspaper editor. He was by turns fêted, imprisoned, and banished. After flickering through life like an *ignis fatuus*, he died in his fifty-second year, leaving his wife and family destitute. Very different was Franz Schubert, the musical prodigy of Vienna, though his life was no more happy than that of Schubart. While but a child he played the violin, organ, and pianoforte. At eighteen he composed his popular *Erl King*, scribbling the notes down rapidly after he had read the words twice over. His genius teemed with the loveliest musical fancies, as his published works abundantly prove. He is supposed to have produced upwards of five hundred songs, besides operas, masses, sonatas, symphonies, and quartettes. He died when only thirty-one years old, almost destitute.

The musical composers of Italy have exhibited the same precocious signs of genius. Spontini composed his first opera, *I Puntigli delle Donne*, at seventeen, and its complete success spread his fame over Italy. Cherubini composed a mass and motet at thirteen, which excited a great sensation at Florence, his native city. Paisiello composed a comic interlude at fourteen; and he was employed to compose an opera for the principal theatre of Bologna at twenty-two. Cimarosa, the cobbler's son, wrote *Baroness Stramba*, his first musical work, at nineteen. Paganini played the violin at eight, and composed a sonata at the same age. Rossini's father was a horn-player in the orchestra of a strolling company of players, of which his mother was a second-rate actress and singer. At the age of ten young Rossini played second horn to his father. He

afterwards sang in choruses until his voice broke. At eighteen he composed *Cambiale di Matrimonio*, his first opera; and three years later he composed his *Tancredi*, which extended his fame throughout Europe.

The French composers, Boildieu, Gretry, and Halévy, gave indications of musical genius at an early age. Boildieu wrote his first one-act opera at eighteen. Gretry's songs were sung everywhere when he was twenty. At the same age Halévy obtained the first prize for his cantata of *Hermione*. Though the English have not as yet been great in musical composition, Purcell composed some of his best anthems while a boy-chorister at Westminster. Crotch was a precocity that broke down. Though he played the organ at four years old, there is scarcely a note of his musical compositions that he did not owe to his predecessors or contemporaries. The two Wesleys were precocious. Charles played the harpsichord at three, when his mother used to tie him to the chair lest he should fall off. Balfe composed his *Lover's Mistake* when only nine, and Madame Vestris sang the song with great applause in *Paul Pry*.

It is worthy of remark that there has been no instance of musical precocity, or even of musical genius, amongst girls. There may have been some prodigies, but they have come to nothing. There has been no female Bach, Handel, or Mozart. And yet hundreds of girls are taught music for one boy; nor have they any such obstructions to contend against as boys have occasionally had to encounter. It may also be observed that musical genius seems to be a most consuming one. Though Handel and Rossini lived to be old men, Schubert died at thirty-one, Mozart at thirty-six, Purcell at thirty-seven, Mendelssohn at thirty-eight, and Weber at forty—these great musicians seeming to have been consumed by their own fire. Rossini wrote his *William*

Tell at thirty-seven, after which he wrote but little. His *Stabat Mater* was composed at fifty. He was a wise man, for he knew when to leave off.

The lives of painters and sculptors afford many indications of early promise. The greatest instance of all, that of Michael Angelo, showed the tendency of his genius. He was sent into the country when a child, to be nursed by the wife of a stone-mason, which led him to say in after years that he had imbibed a love of the mallet and chisel with his mother's milk. From his earliest years he displayed an intense passion for drawing. As soon as he could use his hands and fingers, he covered the walls of the stone-mason's house with his rough sketches, and when he returned to Florence he continued his practice on the ground-floor of his father's house. When he went to school he made little progress with his books, but he continued indefatigable in the use of his pencil, spending much of his time in haunting the *ateliers* of the painters. The profession of an artist being then discreditable, his father, who was of an ancient and illustrious family, first employed moral persuasion upon his son Michael, and that failing, personal chastisement. He passionately declared that no son of his house should ever be a miserable stone-cutter. But in vain; the boy would be an artist, and nothing else.

The father was at last vanquished, and reluctantly consented to place him as a pupil under Ghirlandaio. That he had by that time made considerable progress in the art is evident by the fact that his master stipulated in the agreement (printed in Vasari's *Lives*) to pay a monthly remuneration to the father for the services of his son. Young Buonarotti's improvement was so rapid that he not only surpassed the other pupils of his master, but also the master himself. But the sight of the statues in the gardens of Lorenzo de

Medici so inflamed his mind that, instead of being a painter, he resolved on devoting himself to sculpture. His progress in this branch of art was so great that in his eighteenth year he executed his basso-relievo of "The Battle of the Centaurs"; in his twentieth year his celebrated statue of "The Sleeping Cupid"; and shortly after his gigantic marble statue of "David." Reverting to the art of painting, he produced some of his greatest works in quick succession. Before he reached his twenty-ninth year he had painted his cartoon, illustrative of an incident in the wars of Pisa, when a body of soldiers, surprised while bathing, started up to repulse the enemy. Benvenuto Cellini has said that he never equalled this work in any of his subsequent productions.

Raphael was another wonderfully precocious youth, though his father, unlike Michael Angelo's, gave every encouragement to the cultivation of his genius. He was already eminent in his art at the age of seventeen. He is said to have been inspired at the sight of the great works of Michael Angelo, which adorned the Sistine Chapel at Rome. With the candour natural to a great mind he thanked God that he had been born in the same age with so great an artist. Raphael painted his "School of Athens" in his twenty-fifth year, and his "Transfiguration" at thirty-seven, when he died. This picture was carried in the funeral procession to his grave in the Pantheon; though left unfinished, it is considered to be the finest picture in the world.

Leonardo da Vinci gave early indications of his remarkable genius. He was skilled in arithmetic, music, and drawing. When a pupil under Verrocchio, he painted an angel in a picture by his master on the "Baptism of Christ." It was painted so exquisitely that Verrocchio felt his inferiority to his pupil so much, that from that time forth he gave up painting in despair. When Leonardo reached

mature years his genius was regarded as almost universal. He was great as a mathematician, an architect and engineer, a musician, and a painter.

Guercino, when only ten years old, painted a figure of the Virgin on the front of his father's house, which was greatly admired; it exhibited the genius of which he afterwards displayed so many proofs. Tintoretto was so skilful with his pencil and brush that his master Titian, becoming jealous, discharged him from his service. But this rebuff had the effect of giving additional vigour to his energies, and he worked with such rapidity that he used to be called *Il Furioso*, until he came to be recognised as one of the greatest and most prolific painters in Italy.

Canova is said to have given indications of his genius at four years old by modelling a lion out of a roll of butter. He began to cut statuary from the marble at fourteen, and went on from one triumph to another. Thorwaldsen carved figure-heads for ships when thirteen—working in the shop of his father, who was a wood-carver. At fifteen, he carried off the silver medal of the Academy of Arts at Copenhagen for his bas-relief of "Cupid Reposing"; and at twenty, he gained the gold medal for his drawing of "Heliodorus Driven from the Temple."

Claude Joseph Vernet drew skilfully in his fifth year, and before he had reached his twentieth year his pictures were celebrated. Paul Potter painted his greatest picture—the famous "Bull" at the Hague—when in his twenty-second year, and he dropt his brush before he was twenty-nine. Wilkie could draw before he could read, and he could paint before he could spell correctly. He painted his "Pitlessie Fair," containing about 140 figures, in his nineteenth year. Sir Edwin Landseer painted his "Dogs Fighting" at sixteen; the picture was much admired, and was at once purchased and engraved.

Poets also, like musicians and artists, have in many cases given early indications of their genius—especially poets of a sensitive, fervid, and impassioned character. The great Italian poets—Dante, Tasso, and Alfieri—were especially precocious. Dante showed this when a boy of nine years old by falling passionately in love with Beatrice, a girl of eight; and the passion thus inspired became the pervading principle of his life, and the source of the sublimest conceptions of his muse. Tasso possessed the same delicate, throbbing temperament of genius: he was a poet while but a child. At ten years old, when about to join his father at Rome, he composed a canzone on parting from his mother and sister at Naples. He compared himself to Ascanius escaping from Troy with his father Æneas. At seventeen he composed his *Rinaldo* in twelve cantos, and by his thirty-first year he had completed his great poem of *Jerusalem Delivered*, which he began at twenty-one.

Metastasio, when a boy of ten, improvised in the streets of Rome; and Goldoni, the comic poet, when only eight, made a sketch of his first play. Goldoni was a sad scapegrace. He repeatedly ran away from school and college to follow a company of strolling players. His relations from time to time dragged him away, and induced him to study law, which he afterwards practised at Pisa with considerable success; but the love of the stage proved too strong for him, and he eventually engaged himself as stage poet, and continued to write comedies for the greater part of his life.

But Alfieri—whom some have called the Italian Byron—was one of the most extraordinary young men of his time. Like many precocious poets he was very delicate during his childhood. He was preternaturally thoughtful and sensitive. When only eight years old, he attempted to poison himself

during a fit of melancholy, by eating herbs which he supposed to contain hemlock. But their only effect was to make him sick. He was shut up in his room; after which he was sent in his nightcap to a neighbouring church. "Who knows," said he afterwards, "whether I am not indebted to that blessed nightcap for having turned out one of the most truthful of men." The first sight of the ocean, when at Genoa in his sixteenth year, ravished Alfieri with delight. While gazing upon it he became filled with indefinable longings, and first felt that he was a poet. But though rich, he was uneducated, and unable to clothe in words the thoughts which brooded within him. He went back to his books, and next to college; after which he travelled abroad, galloped from town to town, visited London, drowned ennui and melancholy in dissipation, and then, at nineteen, he fell violently in love. Disappointed in not obtaining a return of his affection, he became almost heart-broken, and resolved to die, but his valet saved his life. He recovered, fell in love again, was again disappointed, then took to his room, cut off his hair, and in the solitude to which he condemned himself began to write verses, which eventually became the occupation of his life. His first tragedy, *Cleopatra*, was produced and acted at Turin when he was twenty-six years old, and in the seven following years he composed fourteen of his greatest tragedies.

It was in poetical composition that the genius of Cervantes first displayed itself. Before he had reached his twentieth year he had composed several romances and ballads, besides a pastoral entitled *Felena*. Wieland was one of the most precocious of German poets. He read at three years old; Cornelius Nepos in Latin at seven; and meditated the composition of an epic at thirteen. Like other poets, the fact of his falling in love first stimulated him to

verse; for at sixteen he wrote his first didactic poem on "Die Vollkommenste Welt." The genius of Klopstock, too, showed itself equally early. He was at first a rompish boy, then an impetuous student, an enamoured youth, and an admired poet. He conceived and partly executed his *Messiah* before he had reached his twentieth year, though the three first cantos were not published until four years later. *The Messiah* excited an extraordinary degree of interest, and gave an immense impetus to German literature.

Schiller's mind was passionately drawn to poetry at an early age. The story is told of his having been found one day, during a thunderstorm, perched on the branch of a tree, up which he had climbed, "to see where the lightning had come from, because it was so beautiful." This was very characteristic of the ardent and curious temperament of the boy. Schiller was inspired to poetic composition by reading Klopstock's poem; his mind was turned in the direction of sacred poetry; and by the end of his fourteenth year he had finished an epic poem entitled "Moses." Goethe was a precocious child, so much so that it is recorded that he could write German, French, Italian, Latin, and Greek, before he was eight. At that early age, he had anxious thoughts about religion. He devised a form of worship to the "God of Nature," and even burned sacrifices. Music, drawing, natural science, and the study of languages,—all had their special charms for the wonderful boy. Korner also, the ardent and the brave, met the death which he envied—on the field of battle, for his country's liberties—at the early age of twenty-two. As a boy, he was sickly and delicate; yet he was possessed by the true poetic faculty. At nineteen he published his first book of poems; and he wrote his last piece, *The Song of the Sword*, only two hours before the battle in which he fell. Novalis, also,

was another German poet of promise, who achieved all that he accomplished by his twenty-ninth year, when he died.

Many like instances might be cited of early promise as well as performance on the part of French and English poets. Indeed, the poetic genius—depending, as it does, upon peculiar organisation and temperament—is that which displays itself the earliest; and if it do not appear before the age of twenty, most probably it will not appear at all. Montaigne has expressed the belief that our souls are adult at that age. "A soul," he says, "that has not by that time given evident earnest of its force and virtue, will never after come to proof. Natural parts and excellences produce that which they have of vigorous and fine within that time or never."[1] This statement, though perhaps put too strongly, is yet in the main true. The mind and soul give promise of their genuine qualities in youth, and though some plants flower late, the greater number flower in the spring and summer of youth, rather than in the autumn and winter of age.

Moore, the Irish poet, has observed, that nearly all the first-rate comedies, and many of the first-rate tragedies, have been the productions of young men. Lope de Vega, and Calderon, two of the most prolific of dramatists, began writing very early—the one at twelve, the other at thirteen. The former recited verses of his own composition, which he wrote down and exchanged with his playfellows for prints and toys. At twelve, by his own account, he had not only written short pieces, but composed dramas. His heroic pastoral of *Arcadia* was published at eighteen. He was with the Spanish Armada, in its assault upon England in 1588. He was then in his twenty-sixth year; and in the course of that perilous and fruitless voyage, he wrote several

[1] Montaigne's *Essays*, book i., chap. lvii.: "Of Age."

of his poems. But it was after he returned to Spain and entered the priesthood that he composed the hundreds of plays through which his name has become so famous. Calderon also was a most prolific playwriter in his youth, having added some four hundred dramas to the national stock. His first work, *Carro del Cielo*, was written at thirteen. He became a priest at fifty, and wrote only sacred pieces after he had entered the Church.

These young Spanish dramatists reached their maturity at an early period. Like girls of the South, who reach their puberty early, ripened by the sun, they accomplished all their great works long before they had reached the middle period of life. In northern climes the mental powers ripen more slowly. Yet Racine wrote his first successful tragedy at twenty-five ; and his great work *Phêdre*, which he himself thought to be the supreme effort of his dramatic muse, at thirty-eight. Molière's education was of the slenderest description ; but he overcame the defects of his early training by diligent application ; and in his thirty-first year he brought out his first play, *L'Etourdi*. The whole of his works were produced between then and his fifty-first year, when he died. Voltaire began by satirising the Fathers of the Jesuit College in which he was educated as early as his twelfth year, when Père le Jay is said to have prophesied of him—"qu'il serait en France le coryphée du Deïsme." His father wished him to apply himself to the study of law, and believed him to be ruined when he discovered that he wrote verses and frequented the gay circles of Paris. At twenty, Voltaire was imprisoned in the Bastile for writing satires upon the voluptuous tyrant who then misgoverned France. While there, he corrected his tragedy of *Œdipe*, which he had written at nineteen, and then he began his *Henriade*. The tragedy

was performed when Voltaire was in his twenty-second year.

Kotzebue was another instance of precocious dramatic genius. He made attempts at poetical composition when about six years old, and at seven he wrote a one-page comedy. He used to steal into the Weimar Theatre, when he could not obtain admittance in the regular way, and hide himself behind the big drum until the performances began. His chief amusement consisted in putting together toy theatres, and working puppet personages on the stage. His first tragedy was privately acted at Jena, where he was a student, in his eighteenth year. A few years later, while living at Reval, he produced, amongst other pieces, the drama so well known in England as *The Stranger*. Schiller's *Robbers* was commenced at nineteen, and published at twenty-one. His *Fiesco* and *Court Intriguing and Love* were written at twenty-three.

Victor Hugo was an equally precocious dramatist. He wrote his first tragedy of *Irtamène* when fifteen years old. He carried off three successive prizes at the Academy des Jeunes Floraux, and thus won the title of Master in that Institution. At twenty he wrote *Bug Jargal*, and in the following year his *Hans d'Islande* and his first volume of *Odes et Ballades*. The contemporary poets of France were then nearly all young men. "No writer," said the sarcastic critic Moreau, "is now respected in France if he is above eighteen years of age." Casimir Delavigne began writing poetry at fourteen, and published his first volume at twenty. Lammenais wrote his *Paroles d'un Croyant* at sixteen. Lamartine's *Meditations Poetiques* appeared when he was twenty-eight; and the work sold to the extent of 40,000 copies in four years.

Among English writers, the same dramatic and poetical

precocity has occasionally been observed. Congreve wrote his *Incognita*, a romance, at nineteen, and *The Double Dealer* at twenty. Indeed, all his plays were written before he was twenty-five. Wycherley said of himself that he wrote *Love in a Wood* at nineteen, and *The Plain Dealer* at twenty; but Macaulay doubts the statement.[1] The first-mentioned play was certainly not publicly acted until Wycherley had reached his thirtieth year. Farquhar wrote his *Love and a Bottle* at twenty, and his *Constant Couple* at twenty-two. He died at the early age of twenty-nine; and in the last year of his life he wrote his celebrated *Beaux' Stratagem*. Vanbrugh was a very young man when he sketched out *The Relapse* and *The Provoked Wife*. Otway produced his first tragedy at twenty-four, and his last and greatest, *Venice Preserved*, at thirty-one. Savage wrote his first comedy, *Woman's a Riddle*, at eighteen, and his second, *Love in a Veil*, at twenty. Charles Dibdin brought out his *Shepherd's Artifice* at Covent Garden, at the age of sixteen; while Sheridan crowned his reputation for dramatic genius by bringing out his perennially interesting *School for Scandal* at twenty-six.

Of English poets, perhaps the very greatest were not precocious, though many gave early indications of genius. We know very little of the youth of Chaucer, Shakespeare, or Spenser, and very little even of their manhood. So far as is known, Shakespeare wrote his first poem, *Venus and Adonis*—of which he speaks as "the first heir of my invention"—in his twenty-eighth year; he began writing his plays about the same time, and he probably continued to write them until shortly before his death, in his fifty-second year. Spenser published his first poem, *The Shepherd's Calendar*, at twenty-six, and Milton composed his masque of *Comus* at

[1] *Essays*, 8vo edition, p. 565.

about the same age, though he had already given indications of his genius. But Cowley was more precocious than Milton, although he never rose to the height of *Paradise Lost*. At the early age of fifteen Cowley published a volume entitled *Poetic Blossoms*, containing, amongst other pieces, "The Tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe," written when he was only twelve years old.

Pope also "lisped in numbers." While yet a child, he aimed at being a poet, and formed plans of study. Notwithstanding his perpetual headache and his deformity, the results of ill-health, he contrived to write clever verses. The boy was father of the man; the author of *The Dunciad* began with satire, and at twelve he was sent home from school for lampooning his tutor. But he had better things in store than satire. Johnson says that Pope wrote his *Ode on Solitude* in his twelfth year, his *Ode on Silence* at fourteen, and his *Pastorals* at sixteen, though they were not published until he was twenty-one. He made his translation of the *Iliad* between his twenty-fifth and thirtieth year. Joseph Addison, notwithstanding his boyish tricks and his leadership in barrings-out at school, proved a diligent student, and achieved great distinction at Oxford for his Latin verse.

The marvellous boy, Chatterton, who "perished in his pride," ran his short but brilliant career in seventeen years and nine months. Campbell, the poet, has said of him, "No English poet ever equalled Chatterton at sixteen." His famous *Ode to Liberty* and his exquisite piece, *The Minstrel's Song*, give perhaps the best idea of the strength and grasp of his genius. But his fierce and defiant spirit, his scornful pride, his defective moral character, and his total misconception of the true conditions of life, ruined him, as they would have ruined a much stronger man; and he poisoned himself almost before he had begun to live.

A few more instances of precocious poets. Bishop Heber translated *Phædrus* into English verse when he was only seven years old; and in his first year at Oxford he gained the prize for Latin verse. Burns, though rather a dull boy, began to rhyme at sixteen. James Montgomery wrote verses at thirteen; he wrote a mock-heroic poem of a thousand lines in his fourteenth year, and began a serious poem to be entitled *The World*. Rogers used to date his first determination for poetry to the perusal, when a boy, of Beattie's *Minstrel*. When a young clerk in his father's office, he meditated a call upon Dr. Johnson, but on reaching his house in Bolt Court, his courage forsook him as he was about to lift the knocker. Two years after Johnson's death, in 1786, Rogers, when in his twenty-third year, published his first volume, *An Ode to Superstition, and other Poems*. Robert Burns published his first volume in the same year.

Thomas Moore was another precocious poet. He was a pretty boy; Joseph Atkinson, one of his early friends, spoke of him as an infant Cupid sporting on the bosom of Venus. He wrote love verses to Zelia at thirteen, and began his translation of *Anacreon* at fourteen. At that age he composed an ode about "Full goblets quaffing," and "Dancing with nymphs to sportive measures, led by a winged train of pleasures," that might have somewhat disconcerted his virtuous mother, the grocer's wife. But Moore worked his way out of luscious poetry; and the Dublin Anacreon at length became famous as the author of the *Irish Melodies*, *Lalla Rookh*, *The Epicurean*, and the *Life of Byron*.

Some precocious young poets have died of consumption at an early age. Henry Kirke White wrote all his poems between thirteen and twenty-one, when he died. Michael Bruce also died at twenty-one, and left behind him many

short poems of great promise, which were published posthumously. Robert Pollok, author of *The Course of Time*, died at twenty-eight; and John Keats, the greatest and brightest genius of them all, published his first volume of poetry at twenty-one, and his last at twenty-four, shortly after which he died. Yet Keats was by no means precocious in his earliest years. When a boy at school, he was chiefly distinguished for his terrier-like pugnacity; and his principal amusement was fighting. Though he was a general and insatiable reader, his mind showed no particular bias until he reached his sixteenth year, when the perusal of Spenser's *Faëry Queen* set his mind on fire, and reading and writing poetry became the chief employment of his short existence.

Shelley was another "bright particular star" of the same epoch. He was precocious in a remarkable degree. When a schoolboy at Eton, and only fifteen years of age, he composed and published a complete romance, out of the proceeds of which he gave a "spread" to his friends. He was early known as "mad Shelley," or "the atheist." At eighteen he published his *Queen Mab*, to which Leigh Hunt affixed the atheistical notes; at nineteen, he was expelled from University College, Oxford, for his defence of atheism; and between then and his thirtieth year, when he was accidentally drowned, he produced his wonderful series of poems. But Shelley was never thoroughly sane. He was a throbbing bundle of nerves, rather than a healthy muscular man. He was subject to the strangest illusions, and full of eccentricities. At college he was considered to be "cracked." Yet his intelligence was quick and subtle; every fibre of his fragile frame thrilled with sensitiveness; and the productions of his fertile genius were full of musical wildness and imagination,—perhaps more than any poems that have ever been written, either before or since his time.

Byron was another great and erratic genius, belonging to the same group as Keats and Shelley. Of turbulent and violent temper, he was careless of learning at school, yet he could "fall in love" when not quite eight years old. He was club-footed. While at Aberdeen he was nicknamed "Shauchlin' Geordie"; yet he strove to distinguish himself in the sports of youth, and, like Keats, he fought his way to supremacy amongst his schoolfellows,—"losing," as he himself says, "only one battle out of seven." While at Trinity College, Cambridge, he kept a bear and several bull-dogs, and indulged in many eccentricities. A strange training, one would think, for a poet! Yet, as early as his twelfth year, he had broken out into verse, inspired by the boyish passion which he entertained for a cousin of about his own age. With all his waywardness, Byron was a voracious reader in general literature, and he early endeavoured to embody his thoughts in poetry. In his eighteenth year, while yet at college, he had printed a thin quarto volume of poems for private circulation, and in the following year he published his *Hours of Idleness*. Stung into revenge by the contemptuous notice of his volume by Henry Brougham in the *Edinburgh Review*, he published, at twenty-one, his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. Three years later, when twenty-four, the first canto of his *Childe Harold* appeared. "At twenty-five," said Macaulay, "he found himself on the highest pinnacle of literary fame, with Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, and a crowd of other distinguished writers at his feet. There is scarcely an instance in history of so sudden a rise to so dizzy an eminence."[1] He died in his thirty-seventh year—an age that has been fatal to so many men of genius.

Of other modern poets it may be summarily mentioned

[1] Macaulay, *Essays*, 8vo edition, p. 139.

that Campbell wrote his *Pleasures of Hope* at twenty-two; Southey, his *Joan of Arc* at nineteen, and *Wat Tyler* in the following year; Coleridge wrote his first poem at twenty-two,[1] and his *Hymn before Sunrise*—than which poetical literature presents no more remarkable union of sublimity and power—at twenty-five. Bulwer Lytton produced his *Ismael* at fifteen, and *Weeds and Wildflowers* (a volume of poems) at twenty-one. Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote prose and verse at ten, and published her first volume of poems at seventeen; while Robert Browning, her husband, published his *Paracelsus* at twenty-three. Alfred Tennyson wrote his first volume of poems at eighteen, while at nineteen he gained the Chancellor's Medal at Cambridge for his poem of *Timbuctoo*, and at twenty he published his *Lyrical Poems*, which contained some of his most admired pieces.

Thus the tumultuous heat of youth has given birth to many of the noblest things in music, painting, and poetry. The poetic fancy may, however, pale with advancing years. Akenside, late in life, never reached the lustre of invention displayed in his early works. Yet, in many cases, the finest productions have come from the ripeness of age. Goethe was of opinion that the older was the riper poet. Milton had, indeed, written his *Comus* at twenty-six; but he was upwards of fifty when he began his greatest work. Although the young geniuses above mentioned did great

[1] Coleridge, in his *Lay Sermon*, thus refers to the significance of the writings of young men:—"Turn over the fugitive writings that are still extant of the age of Luther; peruse the pamphlets and loose sheets that came out in flights during the reign of Charles the First and the Republic; and you will find in these one continued comment on the aphorism of Lord Chancellor Bacon (a man assuredly sufficiently acquainted with the extent of secret and personal influence), that the knowledge of the speculative principles of men in general, between the age of twenty and thirty, is the one great source of political prophecy."

things at an early age, had they lived longer they might have done better. The strength of genius does not depart with youth.

Yet the special qualifications which ensure future eminence, usually prove their existence at an early age—between seventeen and two or three-and-twenty. Although the development of poetic power may be slow, if the germs are there they will eventually bud into active life at favourable opportunities. Crabbe and Wordsworth, who ripened late, were early poetasters. Crabbe, when a surgeon's apprentice in Suffolk, filled a drawer with verses, and gained a prize for a poem on Hope, offered by the proprietors of a lady's newspaper. Wordsworth, though left very much to himself when a boy, and of a rather moody and perverse nature, nevertheless began to write verses in the style of Pope in his fourteenth or fifteenth year. Though Shelley sarcastically said of Wordsworth that "he had no more imagination than a pint-pot," he was, nevertheless, like Shakespeare, a poet for all time. He showed none of the precocity which distinguished Shelley, but grew slowly and solidly, like an oak, until he reached his full stature.

Scott was anything but a precocious boy. He was pronounced a Greek blockhead by his schoolmaster. Late in life, he said of himself that he had been an incorrigibly idle imp at school. But he was healthy, and eager in all boyish sports. His true genius early displayed itself in his love for old ballads and his extraordinary gift for story-telling. When Walter Scott's father found that the boy had on one occasion been wandering about the country with his friend Clark, resting at intervals in the cottages, and gathering all sorts of odd experiences of life, he said to him, "I greatly doubt, sir, you were born for nae better than a gangrel scrape-gut." Of his gift for story-telling when a boy,

Scott himself gives the following account: "In the winter play-hours, when hard exercise was impossible, my tales used to assemble an admiring audience round Lucky Brown's fireside, and happy was he that could sit next to the inexhaustible narrator." Thus the boy was the forerunner of the man, and his novels were afterwards received by the world with as much delight as his stories had been received by his schoolfellows at Lucky Brown's. "Two boys," says Carlyle, "were once of a class in the Edinburgh Grammar School: John, ever trim, precise, and dux; Walter, ever slovenly, confused, and dolt. In due time, John became Bailie John of Hunter Square, and Walter became Sir Walter Scott of the Universe." Carlyle pithily says that the quickest and completest of all vegetables is the cabbage!

The growth of Scott's powers was comparatively slow. He had reached his thirtieth year before he had done anything decisively pointing towards literature. He was thirty-one when the first volume of his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* was published; and he had reached forty-three when he published his first volume of *Waverley*,—though it had been partly written, and then laid aside, nine years before. Nor was Burns, though as fond as Scott of old ballads, by any means precocious; but, like him, he had strong health and a vigorous animal nature. Yet at eighteen or nineteen, as he himself informs us, the marvellous ploughboy had sketched the outlines of a tragedy.

The instances are almost equally numerous in which eminent scientific and literary men have given indications of their innate powers when comparatively young. In many cases their genius has shown itself spontaneously,—sometimes in the face of manifold difficulties and obstructions, or, in other cases, where favourable opportunities have been

offered for its development. Tasso and Galileo had alike early difficulties to encounter. Tasso's father, Bernardo, was a poet; but as his productions had only brought him poverty and misery, he determined to suppress all poetic tendencies in his son, and devote him sternly to law. In like manner, the father of Galileo, a poor noble of Pisa, who was a mathematician, carefully avoided giving his son any mathematical instruction, intending him for the practice of medicine. But nature was in both cases too strong to be suppressed. Tasso became a poet, and Galileo a mathematician and inventor. While the latter was apparently studying Galen or Celsus, he had Euclid or Archimedes buried between the books. Like Newton, he displayed an early aptitude for mechanical inventions, employing his leisure in constructing all manner of model machines. At the age of seventeen he became a student at the University of Pisa, and entered simultaneously on the study of medicine and natural philosophy. But the latter absorbed the greatest share of his attention. When only eighteen, he made his first discovery of the isochronous oscillations of the pendulum, to which he was led by observing with attention the vibrations of the lamp suspended in the nave of the cathedral. It was characteristic of Galileo, then a student of medicine, to apply his discovery to determine the beat of the pulse —still an expedient in everyday medical practice; and he constructed a pendulum for the purpose, giving it the name of *pulsilogium*.[1]

At thirty, Galileo was employed by the Venetian government to erect machines for raising the water for supplying the city. Later, we find him studying the properties of the magnet, pursuing his inquiries as to the centre of gravity and the equilibrium of submerged bodies, and profoundly studying

[1] Parchappe: *Galilée, sa Vie, ses Découvertes, et ses Travaux*, p. 19.

those laws of motion, on an accurate account of which the movements of the heavenly bodies can alone be understood. At twenty-five, he published his essay on the *Hydrostatic Balance*, which so enhanced his reputation that he was appointed lecturer on mathematics to the university. Viviani positively affirms that Galileo invented the thermometer between his thirtieth and thirty-third year. According to Galileo's own account, he invented the telescope at Venice in 1609, in his forty-fifth year, presenting his first instrument to the Doge "in full senate";[1] and shortly after he invented the microscope.

But Galileo was as great in his age as in his youth. Indeed, his fame as a man of science has been almost eclipsed by that of the martyr. His work on *The System of the World*, written at sixty-eight, subjected him to the threats, if not to the actual torture, of the Inquisition. His last work, which he himself considered to be his greatest, *The Dialogues on Local Motion*, was finished in his seventy-second year. He was still occupied in his seventy-seventh year, when he was totally blind, in applying the pendulum to clocks as a measure of time, entrusting the execution of the plan to his son; and he was engaged in this work when carried off by death. It was proposed to erect a monument over the remains of the distinguished philosopher; but, as he had lost the favour of the Church by asserting that the world revolved on its axis, the Pope would not allow it; and his body lay in an obscure corner of the convent in which it was buried for about a century, until in 1737 his remains were disinterred, and removed to the Church of Santo Croce in Florence, where they now repose under a noble monument.

As Galileo, almost by main force, took himself out of the

[1] Parchappe, p. 49.

pursuit for which his father had destined him, so Tycho Brahe forsook the practice of law, and devoted himself to the pursuit of astronomy. He was the scion of a noble family, and his father intended him to bear arms; but Tycho had a nobler ambition: he aimed at a knowledge of the universe, especially the wonders of the earth and heavens. He was sent to college at Copenhagen, and while a student there, in his fourteenth year, his attention was directed to the subject of astronomy by the eclipse of the sun, which occurred in August 1560. Fascinated with the subject, he proceeded to study astronomy by the aid of such books as he could procure, which were few in number; but the tutor, finding that the pursuit severely interfered with his study of the law, was under the necessity of prohibiting the further study of the heavens. Tycho Brahe nevertheless pursued it in secret, and watched the stars by night, while his tutor slept. He spent all the money that he could muster upon astronomical instruments; though these were but few, and of a rough sort. He studied the constellations all the night through, and used a small globe for the purpose, no bigger than his fist, which he bought with his pocket-money.

Tycho Brahe found that the existing tables of the constellations were all wrong, and proceeded to correct them, making use of a pair of common compasses, which he used as his instrument for observing and defining the angles between the stars. He afterwards obtained a better instrument in the form of a parallactic rule. With these and other slender aids, he computed the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, which he effected in August 1563, before he had completed his seventeenth year. His father and relations detested his astronomical occupations, which they considered to be altogether beneath the dignity of a person

of noble birth; but a certain uncle encouraged him to follow the bent of his genius, the result of which dignified, far more than it degraded, the honourable rank which he inherited. He was sent from Copenhagen to Augsburg University; and while there he had a large quadrant constructed, with which he made his observations. In his twenty-sixth year, disregarding the opposition of his relations, he published his first treatise, *De Novâ Stellâ*, and followed it up by a series of astronomical publications extending over a period of about thirty years.

Kepler, the co-labourer of Tycho, was, like him, an early and indefatigable student. He was weak and sickly as a child, and had many difficulties to encounter in early life. His father, though of good descent, became reduced in circumstances, and took to keeping a tavern, where his boy, the future astronomer, acted as *garçon de cabaret*. In his twelfth year he was sent to a monastic school at Maulbronn, where the cost of his education was defrayed by the Duke of Würtemburg. Kepler's studies were much interrupted by ill-health, which was the bane of his life. Nevertheless he made rapid progress in learning. By reason of his merit he was admitted a resident student at Tübingen University, where he took the degree of Master of Arts in his twentieth year, and at the same time attained the second place in the annual examination. About two years later, we find him appointed astronomical lecturer at Gratz in Styria; and in his twenty-fifth year he published *Mysterium Cosmographicum*, his first contribution to the literature of science. This was an extraordinary work for so young a man, taking into account his bad health and the menial occupation of his early years. He continued to labour indefatigably, publishing treatise after treatise, upon magnetism and astronomical subjects, until in 1601, in his thirtieth

year, he was appointed Imperial Mathematician, when he assisted Tycho Brahe in his calculation of the Rodolphine Astronomical Tables. Eight years later, his *New Astronomy* appeared—a work which may be said to form the connecting link between the discoveries of Copernicus and Newton.

Sir Isaac Newton was not so remarkable an instance of the early development of mathematical genius. He was not a precocious child. He was so small and weak at his birth that his mother said he might have been put into a quart mug. He was reared with great difficulty, and was scarcely expected to live. Hence he was allowed much liberty and idleness when a boy. It may be remarked, that many of the most distinguished men were, like Newton, weak and sickly in their childhood. Among the more or less puny and delicate children were Bacon, Pascal, Descartes, Newton, Wren, Locke, Adam Smith, Boyle, Pope, Flaxman, James Watt, Horatio Nelson, and William Pitt.

When Newton was sent to school, he did not particularly distinguish himself; yet at home he was unceasing in his attempts to construct machines. He was constantly occupied with his saw, his hammer, and his chisels. He made model windmills, water-clocks, and sun-dials,—one of which is still to be seen at Woolsthorpe, on the wall of the house in which he was born. He was found unfitted to carry on the business of the farm, for which his mother had destined him; but his uncle Ayscough having discovered him one day working out a mathematical problem under a hedge, instead of attending to his agricultural labours, he was permitted to follow the bent of his genius, and was sent to pursue his studies at Grantham School. At eighteen he was entered student at Trinity College, Cambridge; at twenty-one he discovered the Binomial Theorem; at twenty-three he arrived substantially at his method of

fluxions; at twenty-four he made his discovery of the unequal refrangibility of the rays of light; at twenty-five he made his supreme discovery of the law of gravitation;[1] and at forty-four he presented the manuscript of the *Principia* to the Royal Society. In the following year he had an attack of temporary insanity, and though he lived to the age of eighty-five, he did not, after writing out his *Principia*, give to the world any new work in any branch of science.

James Bernouilli, the first of this wonderful family of philosophers, was intended by his father for the Church; but accident having thrown some geometrical books in his way, he was led with ardour to the study of astronomy. The device, which he afterwards assumed, refers to the parental opposition which he had encountered,—Phaeton driving the Chariot of the Sun, with the motto, "Against my father's will I course among the stars" (*Invito patre sidera verso*). His first work, *On Comets*, appeared in his twenty-sixth year; and at thirty-three he was appointed Professor of Mathematics at the University of Basle.

Blaise Pascal, described by Bayle as "one of the sublimest spirits in the world," displayed his remarkable abilities at a very early age. His father had resolved to devote him exclusively to the study of the dead languages, and with that object kept all books relating to geometry out of his way. Yet Blaise, when only twelve years old, was discovered engaged in solving geometrical problems, drawing the figures with charcoal on the floor of his room. His father then allowed him to follow his bent; and at sixteen he produced a treatise on *Conic Sections*, of such excellence as

[1] Weld, *History of the Royal Society*, i. pp. 369, 370. He had indeed discovered the most universal of all natural laws—the law of gravitation—before he was twenty-five; though one error of observation, not his own, prevented him from demonstrating it until he was nearly forty.

to excite the astonishment of Descartes that the performance should be the work of a mere youth. At nineteen, he invented his machine for calculating numbers. He next occupied himself with a series of able and elaborate experiments as to the equilibrium of liquids and the weight of the atmosphere, in confirmation of the views of Torricelli; the results of which were published after his death. Pascal's scientific life ended when he had reached the age of twenty-five. His mind then became entirely devoted to religious contemplations, the results of which were embodied in his famous *Pensées*, collected and published after his death, which took place at the early age of thirty-nine. Like many other precocious geniuses, Pascal laboured under the excitement of nervous disease, of which, indeed, his precocity was but a symptom.

Descartes was a delicate and fragile boy; yet, by his nineteenth year, he had formed a plan for reforming the entire system of mathematical and philosophical inquiry. Grotius was the only child out of twelve who survived infancy; he wrote Latin verses when only eight years old. Haller was an exceedingly delicate child, afflicted by rickets, sometimes an accompaniment of precocity. When only nine years old he began to compose short memoirs of great men; at ten, he framed a Chaldee grammar; at twelve, he composed verses in German; and at fifteen, he entered upon the study of medicine and physiology, in which he achieved so great a reputation.

Among other mathematicians who, like Pascal, were distinguished at an early age, may be mentioned Clairault, who produced his celebrated *Curves of Double Curvature* at sixteen, though he began them when only thirteen; Lagrange, who was appointed Professor of Mathematics at the Military College of Turin before he had completed his

nineteenth year; Colin Maclaurin, who took the degree of M.A. at fifteen, and was elected by competition Professsor of Mathematics at Aberdeen in his nineteenth year; Lalande, a boy of wonderful powers, who began to sermonise before his family at ten, was then led by reading Fontenelle's *Plurality of Worlds* to study astronomy, and at sixteen made a telescopic observation which determined his studies for life; Dugald Stewart—another delicate child—began at nineteen to teach his father's mathematical class in the University of Edinburgh, and two years later he was appointed joint-professor; Lessing, a wholesale devourer of books, while at school at Meissen, translated the third and fourth books of Euclid, and drew up a history of mathematics; and when leaving school, at fifteen, he delivered a discourse—"De Mathematica Barbarorum." He eventually withdrew from mathematics, and devoted himself to belles lettres.

Francis Bacon was somewhat precocious. Being delicate in health as a boy, he was thrown upon himself and became sedentary and reflective. At twelve, the sight of a juggler playing tricks with cards led him to study the art of legerdemain. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge, at thirteen, and left it at sixteen to enter upon his travels. It has been said that he planned his *Novum Organum* at Cambridge, but of this no special proof exists. At nineteen he published his work, *Of the State of Europe*, showing, amongst other things, accurate observation and considerable penetration. While studying for the bar, to which he was called at twenty-one, Bacon sketched the plan of his *Organum* in a piece which, in his youthful pride and perhaps prophetic forethought, he designated *The Greatest Birth of Time* (Partus Temporis Maximus); but the great work itself was not published until his fifty-ninth year. In the meantime, he had published numerous works—amongst others, his *Essays*

and Counsels, at the age of thirty-six; and his *Advancement of Learning*, at forty-five, when he was immersed in business as a member of Parliament and a barrister in full practice.

Another of the greatest young philosophers of the seventeenth century was Sir Christopher Wren, though he is chiefly remembered as a great architect. Like Pascal and others, he was weakly and precocious as a boy, exhibiting not only much poetic feeling and fancy, but displaying a remarkable taste for abstruse science and philosophy. As early as thirteen he invented an astronomical instrument, which he dedicated to his father in Latin rhyme, as well as a pneumatic engine, and another instrument "of use in pneumonics."[1] At fourteen, Wren was admitted gentleman commoner at Wadham College, Oxford, and afterwards assisted in the early meetings of scientific men, which led to the foundation of the Royal Society. When Evelyn visited Oxford in 1654, he says, "I saw that miracle of a youth, Christopher Wren." And a miracle indeed he was; studying and demonstrating anatomy at twenty-two, appointed Gresham Professor of Astronomy at twenty-five, and making one invention and discovery after another to the number of fifty-three.[2] Amidst his various studies he gave much attention to the study of architecture, in theory as well as practice. It was because of his reputation in this respect that, at the age of thirty-one, he was commissioned to survey and report upon St. Paul's, with a view to the restoration or reconstruction of the Cathedral. This circumstance had the effect of giving an entirely new bias to his life; and from that time forward he devoted himself to architecture—his chief work being the rebuilding of St. Paul's, as well as the other churches which had been destroyed during the great fire of London. Un-

[1] Weld, *History of Royal Society*, i. p. 272. [2] *Ib.* i. p. 274.

like Pascal, Wren lived to a ripe old age, closing his career at ninety, when he was one day found by his servant apparently placidly asleep in his chair, but quite dead.

Many other instances of great young men of science might be given,—such as of the sickly and precocious but brave Spinoza, who polished glasses for a living, to enable him to pursue the study of philosophy, almost before he had emerged from boyhood; of James Watt, who was a thinker from his cradle, and invented the condensing steam-engine, which has produced so great a change in the industry of the world, before he was thirty; of Goethe, who conceived and partly executed his greatest works—and he was a scientific man as well as a poet—when he was a comparatively young man; of Sir William Rowan Hamilton, of Dublin, whom a recent writer has designated as one of those men of genius whose name "will be classed with those of the grandest of all ages and countries, such as Lagrange and Newton." Sir William acquired, at the age of thirteen, a considerable knowledge of not less than thirteen languages.

The celebrated French geographer, D'Anville, was a boy of only twelve years old when the sight of a map determined his future pursuits. He began alone, and without assistance, to draw maps of all countries mentioned in the classics. He achieved so much excellence in his work that, at the age of twenty-two, he was appointed one of the king's geographers. In the course of his busy life he published one hundred and four maps of ancient, and one hundred and six maps of modern geography, besides numerous valuable geographical memoirs. He was accustomed to say of himself that he "had found a geography made of bricks, and left one of gold."

Although Linnæus, at nineteen, was pronounced by his schoolmaster to be, if not a positive blockhead, at least

altogether unfitted for the church, for which his father had destined him, he had the good fortune to be born in a delightful spot on the banks of a lake surrounded by hills and woods and cultivated grounds. The beauty of nature, and the wonders of vegetation by which he was surrounded, called his genius into action. He himself said of his youth, that he walked out of his cradle into a garden, and flowers became his passion. His father, finding that the boy was unsuited for divinity, sent him to college to study medicine; but young Linnæus devoted his whole time to botany, and neither poverty nor misfortune ever moved him from his purpose. Buoyed up by enthusiasm, he determined to make a journey alone through Lapland, in the course of which he travelled over four thousand miles, mostly on foot, and he brought back with him about a hundred plants which had before been unknown and undescribed. The publication of his *Flora Lapponica* established his reputation as the first botanist of his age.

John Ray, the naturalist, whom Cuvier considered to be the founder of modern zoology, was the son of a blacksmith near Braintree. He received a good education, and worked his way to Catherine Hall, Cambridge, where, at twenty-three years of age, he was appointed Greek lecturer; and two years later he was selected as mathematical tutor to his college. But natural history and zoology received the greatest part of his attention and study. He travelled over the greater part of England, Wales, and Scotland, in pursuit of botanical and zoological information, always observing, always full of work, always indefatigable in his favourite pursuit. He says it took him ten years to arrange his *Catalogus Plantarum Circa Cantabrigiam* for publication. He continued his journeys and studies abroad; and he afterwards travelled all over the Low Countries—France,

Germany, Switzerland, and Italy—everywhere observing and collecting facts for future publication.

The same early tendencies to study and close observation have distinguished the leading men in surgery and medicine. Ambrose Paré, the great French surgeon, was acting as stable-boy to an abbé at Laval, when a surgical operation was about to be performed on one of the brethren of the monastery. Paré was called in to assist, and proved so useful, and besides was so much attracted by the pursuit, that he determined to devote himself to the study of surgery, in the practice of which he afterwards became so eminent.

Sir Astley Cooper is said to have been determined to follow the same profession by the following circumstance. A young man having been accidentally run over by a cart, his femoral artery was opened, and the youth was in danger of dying from loss of blood, when young Cooper had the presence of mind to tie his handkerchief above the wounded part sufficiently tight to stop the hæmorrhage. He was encouraged by the result, and determined to follow the profession of surgery in which he had obtained his early success.

M. Petit, the celebrated French surgeon, first attracted the attention of Littré, the great anatomist, by performing vivisection on a rabbit when quite a boy. From the age of seven he was a regular attendant on Littré's lectures. At the end of two years he had become so proficient in anatomy that the charge of the anatomical theatre in which the demonstrations were given was placed solely in his hands, and the remarkable sight was to be observed of a lad between nine and ten years of age, mounted on a chair, delivering lectures on anatomy, which were listened to with pleasure even by able professional men. He devoted him-

self to surgery with like passion, and soon became distinguished as one of the best surgical operators in France.

Blumenbach was another distinguished student of the history and constitution of man. He may be regarded as the father of ethnology. At ten years old he shut himself up with a manufactured skeleton—the beginning of his "Golgotha," as he afterwards called his anthropological collection—for the purpose of studying comparative osteology, with which he was then puzzled. The city of Gotha possessed only one real skeleton, which was the property of a physician, a friend of the Blumenbach family. He constantly visited the physician's house, for the purpose of studying his skeleton. At length he made an artificial fabric of his own from the bones of domestic animals, out of which, by a little manœuvring and patience, he contrived to manufacture a skeleton bearing some resemblance to the human. This was the modest commencement of that osteological collection which afterwards became so famous all over Europe. At seventeen, Blumenbach went to Jena University, and at twenty to Göttingen. When he reached the age of twenty-three, he produced the first of his great works, *On the Natural Varieties of Mankind.*

Bichat was, even in his boyhood, an indefatigable worker. All that he accomplished was done in the course of only a few years, for he died at thirty-two. Buckle has said of his great work, *Anatomie Generale*, published the year before his death, that it "embodies probably the most valuable contribution ever made to physiology by a single mind." He investigated the laws of sensation and irritability, and displayed equal devotion to physiological science, studying more particularly the tissues, with a view to ascertaining the laws of their normal and pathological development. Pinel, in his memoir of Bichat, observes:

"Dans un seul hiver il ouvrit plus de dix cent cadavres. . . . L'esprit a peine à concevoir que la vie d'un seul homme puisse suffire à tant de travaux, à tant de découvertes, faites ou indignées: Bichat et mort avant d'avoir accompli sa trente-deuxième année!"[1]

Boerhaave, the great physician, translated Greek and Latin at eleven, and delivered an eloquent oration before the Professor of Greek at twenty, taking the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the following year. Sir Humphrey Davy made so much progress in chemistry when a boy, though completely unaided, that at twenty he was appointed to take charge of the Pneumatic Institution at Bristol. Dr. Jenner, before his twentieth year, contemplated the possibility of removing from the list of diseases one of the most loathsome and fatal that ever scourged the human race, and in the long run he triumphantly succeeded.

Dr. Richard Owen, the distinguished naturalist, very narrowly escaped on two occasions the career in which he has since become so famous. In the first place he was sent to sea, and served as a midshipman on board the *Tribune*. But the American war having terminated, his ship was paid off, and on his return home he became apprenticed to a surgeon at Lancaster. He was sent to Edinburgh, where he studied under Dr. Barclay, and acquired a taste for comparative anatomy. He removed to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, where he attracted the notice of John Abernethy, the well-known surgeon, and assisted him in the dissecting-room. He obtained his diploma as surgeon, but as there seemed to be no opportunity for advancing himself in his profession, he bethought himself of again going to sea. He obtained an appointment as assistant-surgeon, and went to take leave of his

[1] *Anat. Gen.* i. pp. 13, 16.

eccentric friend and master. "What is all this about?" said Abernethy; "where are you going?"—"Going to sea, sir."—"Going to sea? Going to the devil!"—"I hope not, sir."—"Going to sea! You had better, I tell you, go to the devil at once," reiterated glorious John, dwelling on the temptations, the difficulties, the loss of time and fame that must be the result of so rash a step, and insisting on another interview after the pause of a week. Owen revisited his rough but downright friend at the expiration of that time, when Abernethy proposed an appointment at the College of Surgeons. This was accepted; the youthful anatomist found himself happily associated with a man of congenial mind, and though the navy lost a good officer, science gained one of its brightest ornaments.

In literature and languages, as might be expected, the instances of early display of great powers are equally numerous. When Melancthon was only twenty he gave public lectures at Tübingen on Virgil, Terence, Cicero, and Livy; and at twenty-one he was appointed Professor of Greek in the university of Wittenberg. Montesquieu sketched his *Esprit des Lois* before he was twenty. Fénelon made such rapid progress in his studies that at fifteen he preached a sermon before a select assembly at Paris. Gresset wrote *Ver Vert*, one of the wittiest productions in the French language, when he was in his twenty-fourth year. Villemain's reputation for talent was such that at nineteen he was appointed Professor of Rhetoric at the College Charlemagne at Paris, and two years later his *Éloge de Montaigne* was crowned by the Institute of France. Cousin carried off the prize of honour at the same Institute in his sixteenth year, and Auguste Comte gained the first place for mathematics in the École Polytechnique at the same age.

Beckford wrote *Vathek* at twenty-two. "I wrote it," he says, "at one sitting, and in French. The 'Hall of Eblis' was my own fancy. All the females mentioned in *Vathek* were portraits of those in the domestic establishment of Old Fonthall, their imaginary good or ill qualities exaggerated to suit my purpose." Dr. William Wotton showed an extraordinary faculty for learning languages when a boy. At five he could read and translate Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. When ten he knew Chaldaic, Syriac, and Arabic. When appointed to a living in Wales he acquired a command of Welsh, but like Magliabechi, who had a much more extensive knowledge of languages, he never did anything else but acquire them. He did not leave a single thought for the benefit of others. The precocity of both proved failures.

It was different with Sir William Jones, who was considered a remarkable boy, even when at school. His father was a mathematician of eminence, but died when the boy was only three years old. At Harrow young Jones surpassed all his schoolfellows in learning. Dr. Thackeray, the headmaster, said of him: "If Jones were left naked and friendless on Salisbury Plain, he would nevertheless find the road to fame and fortune." Every reader knows of Sir William Jones's achievements.

Sir James Mackintosh, from whom so much was expected when young, proved a "man of promise" to the end. His name used to be mentioned in the neighbourhood of Fortrose, to which he belonged, as a prodigy of learning. But he never had the leisure—perhaps never the perseverance—to be great. He was incessantly resolving, and then reposing from the fatigues of inventing resolutions. When a boy he would read and think half the night, and when a man he would read and think perpetually; but he never

fulfilled the great promises which had been formed of his brilliant career.

Thomas Brown, the metaphysician, was only about eighteen when he wrote and published his *Observations on Darwin's Zoonomia*, the preface to which contained the germ of his doctrine of causation. Dr. Brown was eventually appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, and his lectures, which were published after his death, are considered to be the best text-book on the subject. Dr. Brown was a contributor to the *Edinburgh Review* in his twenty-fourth year. That quarterly was founded and conducted mainly by young men —by Henry Brougham at twenty-three, Francis Horner at twenty-four, Francis Jeffrey at twenty-nine, and Sydney Smith—who, as a boy, was a leader of learning as well as of mischief—at thirty-one.

Dr. Alexander Murray, when a shepherd boy, was considered by his father to be both stupid and lazy. He was always committing some blunder or another when sent to herd the sheep or bring the cattle home. One reason was, that the boy's head was turned upon learning far more than upon grazing. By fifteen, he contrived to teach himself Latin and French, and was soon able to read Cæsar, Ovid, and Livy. He left herding, and became a tutor; learning, in his leisure hours, German, Anglo-Saxon, and Visigothic, after which he digressed into Welsh. In the course of a few years he mastered the whole of the European languages, and began his researches into the more recondite dialects of the East. At the age of thirty, he was acknowledged to be one of the most accomplished linguists of his age; and on a vacancy occurring in the chair of Oriental Languages at Edinburgh, he was appointed Professor at the age of thirty-six. But the brain-work to

which he had for so many years subjected himself, proved more than his weakly constitution could bear, and he only enjoyed the honour for a year, dying at the early age of thirty-seven.

It has sometimes been assumed that boys who distinguish themselves at school and college fail to distinguish themselves in actual life. "How few," said Sir Egerton Bridges, "of those who take honours at the universities are ever afterwards heard of."[1] This, however, is by no means the case. Those special qualifications which ensure future eminence really begin to show their existence and vitality at the ages of from seventeen or eighteen to between two or three-and-twenty. The reasoning faculty then begins to assume its place in the mental organisation, and the gift of understanding things, as well as of knowing them, gives a new form and colour to all that passes through the mind. Hence the young men who come to the front at school and college generally come to the front in the school of actual life. Take, for instance, the lives and history of a few of our most eminent statesmen.

Lord Chatham, Charles James Fox, Windham, Granville, and Wellesley, were distinguished Etonians. Chatham did not particularly distinguish himself at Oxford. In his twentieth year we find him a cornet in the Blues. At twenty-six he entered Parliament, and two years later he delivered his first speech, which at once attracted attention. "That terrible cornet of horse," is said to have given Sir Robert Walpole a pain in the back whenever he rose to speak; for he was one of the most impassioned and inspired of orators. Very different was William Pitt, the "heaven-born minister"—though to have been the son of such a

[1] *Autobiography*, i. pp. 65, 66.

father was a fact of no mean significance in the heraldry of his intellect and character.

Young Pitt was weak and delicate but precociously clever. He was brought up at home, and educated mainly by his father. Lady Holland said of the "little William Pitt" that he was "really the cleverest child she had ever seen."[1] At twelve he left his brother, who was three years older, far behind him. His father used to set him up on a chair to declaim before a large company, greatly to their surprise and admiration. At fourteen he wrote a tragedy in five acts. Before he had completed his fifteenth year he was entered a student at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. He remained there for six years, was an assiduous student, and read extensively in English literature. Macaulay says that his knowledge, both of the ancient languages and of the mathematics, was such as very few men three years older than himself then carried up to college. The work in which he took the greatest delight was Newton's *Principia;* and the readiness with which he solved difficult problems in mathematics was pronounced by one of the moderators to be unrivalled in the University.

Pitt entered Parliament as soon as he came of age. At twenty-two he made his first speech, in support of Burke's plan of economical reform, and he delighted not less than

[1] Lord John Russell, in his *Memorials of Charles James Fox* (who was ten years older than Pitt) gives the following anecdote:— "The Duchess of Leinster related to me a conversation, at which she was present, between her sister, Lady Caroline, and Mr. Fox (Lord Holland). Lady Caroline, in expostulating with her husband on his excessive indulgence to his children, and to Charles in particular, added, 'I have been this morning with Lady Hester Pitt, and there is little William Pitt, *not eight years old*, and really the cleverest child I ever saw, and *brought up so strictly and so proper in his behaviour*, that, *mark my words*, that little boy will be a thorn in Charles's side as long as he lives.'"

astonished the House by his self-possession, his readiness of delivery, and his noble bearing. Hazlitt said of him that "he was always full grown, and had neither the promise nor the awkwardness of a growing intellect." At twenty-three, Pitt was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, and at twenty-four Prime Minister,—"the greatest subject," says Macaulay, "that England had seen during many generations."

Though Edmund Burke was not so precocious as Pitt, he obtained prizes at Trinity College, Dublin, especially for classics. He devoted most of his spare time to general reading, more especially to works on history—the future weapon of his strength. In his twenty-sixth year he published his *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, begun at nineteen, which immediately secured for him a position among the classic authors of his country.

Canning, one of the most brilliant of Eton scholars, acquired an early distinction from the elegance of his Latin and English poetry. At the age of seventeen he started his *Microcosm*—a periodical, the principal contributors to which, besides himself, were Frere and the brothers Smith, of about the same age. Canning entered Christ Church College, Oxford, in his eighteenth year, and distinguished himself by his classical performances. His *Iter ad Meccam*, which was recited in the theatre on the occasion of Lord Crewe's anniversary commemoration, transcended all competition, and was pronounced to be the best Latin poem Oxford had ever produced. Canning entered Parliament at twenty-three; made his first speech in the following year; was appointed Under-Secretary of State in his twenty-sixth year; and rose through offices of increasing importance until his fifty-seventh year, when he became Prime Minister, in the possession of which office he died.

Of later statesmen, Peel and Gladstone have both taken high honours at Oxford. Peel took his degree of B.A. in his twentieth year with unprecedented distinction, being the first who took the honours of a double first-class in classics and mathematics. The same feat was, however, afterwards accomplished by Mr. Gladstone, Lord Cardwell, and Lord Westbury.

Lord Macaulay's career at Cambridge was eminently distinguished. In two consecutive years, when nineteen and twenty respectively, he carried off the Chancellor's medal for English poetry, and in his twenty-second year he gained the Craven Scholarship. Although university prize poems have no special reputation, their authors have often been distinguished men. Mackworth Praed took the Chancellor's medal in two successive years after Macaulay. besides being Browne's medallist for Greek ode and epigrams. Bulwer Lytton afterwards gained the same medal for his poem on "Sculpture." Amongst those who gained prizes for poems at Oxford and Cambridge were the Rev. W. L. Bowles, Bishop Heber, Professor Whewell, Dean Milman, and Lord Tennyson.

It has been observed that it is not the men who take the first rank at the universities who take the first rank in actual life, but oftener the men who take the second and even the third rank. Take, for instance, the Mathematical Tripos at Cambridge, and it will be found that while many of the senior wranglers take high positions as professors, teachers, translators, and occasionally rise to high positions in the church, they do not, as a rule, take the lead in the professional and scientific world. Many of them entirely disappear from public sight. Take the period from 1739 downwards, and we find the following senior wranglers of distinction: Sir John Wilson, Judge of Common Pleas,

1761; Dr. Paley, 1763; Dr. Milner, Dean of Carlisle, 1774; Sir Joseph Littledale, Judge in the Queen's Bench, 1787.

A great run of legal senior wranglers began with the present century. In 1806, we find the name of Pollock, afterwards Lord Chief Baron; in 1808, Bickersteth, Lord Langdale; in 1809, Alderson, Baron of Exchequer, in 1810, Maule, Judge of Common Pleas; while Platt, Baron of Exchequer, was fifth junior optime in the same year. Among the other judges of minor grade, were Sir R. Graham, Baron of Exchequer, who was the third wrangler of his year; Lord Alvanley, Chief Justice of Common Pleas, who was the twelfth. Lord Ellenborough, Sir S. Lawrence, Lord Lyndhurst (who was second), Sir John Williams, Sir N. C. Tindal, Sir L. Shadwell, Lord Wensleydale, Sir T. Coltman, Lord Cranworth, Sir Cresswell Cresswell—all of whom, though they took honours, were not of the first distinction in their respective years. Lord Hatherby, Lord Selborne, and Lord Coleridge also took high honours at their respective universities. Professor Whewell was second wrangler, and Professor Sedgwick fifth.

Among the few scientific men who came out senior wranglers were Sir John Herschell, Professor Airey, Professor Stokes, and Professor Adams—the fellow-discoverer, with M. Leverrier, of the planet Neptune. The Earl of Rosse, the great mechanic of the peerage, graduated first-class in mathematics at Magdalen College, Oxford; but the Honourable J. W. Strut, eldest son of Lord Rayleigh, who came out senior wrangler at Cambridge in 1865, is said to have been the first nobleman's son who has ever achieved this distinction.[1]

A few words in conclusion as to the Great Young Men

[1] *Times*, 1st February 1865.

of history. Although it does not often happen that men are placed in command until they have acquired the experience which usually comes with age, it has nevertheless happened that some of the greatest rulers and commanders in ancient and modern times have been comparatively young men. Genius for command seems to have come like instinct, and it is genius for any pursuit that alone gives a passion for it.

Themistocles as a youth was fired by the love of glory, and longed to distinguish himself in the service of his country. When only about thirty he led the Greek fleet in the sea fight with the Persians under Xerxes at Salamis. The complete victory which ensued was due to the valour of all, but chiefly to the sagacity and persistent bravery of Themistocles. He stood the first in worth as in command, and his compatriots for a time acknowledged his greatness and supremacy.

Alexander the Great was a still more precocious ruler and general. He was no sooner called to the throne of Macedonia, at twenty, than he was called upon to put down a formidable insurrection. In this he completely succeeded, after which he marched southward and subjected the principal states of Greece. In his twenty-second year he assembled an army for the invasion of Persia, crossed the Hellespont, and landed at Abydos. He met the army of Darius on the banks of the Granicus and completely defeated it. In the following year he advanced into Asia Minor, fought and won the battle of Issus, and, two years later, the battle of Arbela, when he was only twenty-five years old. The power of Darius was thus completely broken, the East was laid open to the arms of Alexander, and during his reign of twelve years and eight months he extended his empire from the coasts of the Mediterranean

to the eastern tributaries of the Indus. He died at the age of thirty-one.

Scipio and Pompey were both great in youth. Scipio won the battle of Zana when he was twenty-nine; but Pompey distinguished himself at an earlier age. At twenty-three he raised and commanded the army with which he defeated Marcus Brutus. In the following year—while a mere "beardless youth," as his enemies described him—he made a successful campaign into Africa, and returned in triumph to Rome.

Hannibal was one of the greatest young generals of antiquity, having been bred to war in the camps of Hamilcar and Hasdrubal. At the death of the latter, when Hannibal was only twenty-six, he succeeded to the sole command of the Carthaginian army. After conquering the Spanish tribes who still remained unsubdued, he turned his arms against Rome. In his twenty-eighth year he took Saguntum, after an eight months' siege; then crossed the Pyrenees, advanced to the Rhone, penetrated into Italy through the Alps, and after several successful engagements, fought and won the great battle of Cannæ, when in his thirty-first year.

In the Middle Ages, Charlemagne and Charles Martel were both great warriors in early life. Martel, "The Hammer," as he was called, defeated the Saracens at Tours when a comparatively young man, and thus changed the fate of Europe. Charles the Great, at thirty, was master of France and Germany. Next to Alexander the Great and Cæsar, his was the greatest name in early European history. William the Conqueror, when only twenty, defeated his rebellious nobles at the battle of Val de Dunes; and at thirty-eight he won the victory at Hastings which made him master of England. Edward the Black Prince, when only sixteen, commanded the main division of the English army

at the battle of Crecy. When his father saw him rushing into the thick of the fray, he said: "Let the child win his spurs, and let the day be his." At the end of the fight his father embraced him, saying: "Sweet son, God has given you good perseverance; you are my true son—right loyally have you acquitted yourself this day, and worthy are you of a crown." Ten years later, at twenty-six, the Black Prince won the battle of Poictiers. At twenty-seven, Henry V. gained the victory of Agincourt.

Some of the most distinguished French rulers and generals have been of equally youthful years. Henry of Navarre was, from his sixteenth year, the recognised leader of the Huguenots. At that age he led them at the battles of Jarnac and Moncontour. After the massacre of St. Bartholomew, which occurred in his twenty-third year, he put himself at the head of the French Calvinists, and led them through a series of hazardous and hard-fought campaigns. At thirty-four he won the battle of Coutras, and shortly after, those of Arques and Ivry. The battle of Arques was gained by Henry, with five thousand men, against the Duc de Mayenne, with twenty-five thousand. He conquered his opponent mainly by his youthful energy and activity. It was said of him that he wore out very little broadcloth but a great deal of boot leather, and that he spent less time in bed than the Duc de Mayenne did at table. When some one was extolling in his presence the skill and courage of his rival, Henry observed: "You are right; he is a great captain, but I have always five hours' start of him." Henry got up at four in the morning and Mayenne at about ten.

Condé was another distinguished young French commander. He was so able and successful that he was surnamed "The Great." He won the battle of Rocroi at

twenty-two against a superior Spanish force, and he afterwards defeated in succession the troops of the Emperor of Germany at Fribourg and Nordlingen; and again, in the following year, at Lens in the Artois—all before he was twenty-seven. Turenne was another great commander, though he was by no means precocious. Indeed he was at first considered a dull boy, and learnt slowly and with difficulty. But he was dogged and persevering, and what he did learn was rooted deeply in his mind. When his ambition was appealed to he made rapid progress. Turenne was trained to arms by his uncle, Prince Maurice of Holland, who made him begin his apprenticeship by carrying a musket as a private. After passing through a course of subaltern duty, he obtained a company which was shortly acknowledged to be one of the best drilled and disciplined in the army. At twenty-three Turenne was made maréchal du camp, the next position in rank to that of maréchal de France. The first important service which he performed was in conducting the disastrous retreat from Mayence in 1635. He protected the rear and preserved order with the greatest skill, courage, and self-control. In his twenty-sixth year he conducted the arduous campaign of 1637, during which he took Landrécies and Soire, and finally drove the Spaniards across the Sambre. During the rest of his life Turenne was acknowledged to be the greatest commander of his time, as great in age as in youth. He was killed in battle at Sasbach in his sixty-fourth year.

Marshal Saxe was nursed in arms. At twelve years old he served in the army of the Allies before Lisle. In the following year he had a horse shot under him at the siege of Tournay; and in the same year he was at the battle of Malpalquet. At twenty-four he was maréchal du camp under the Duke of Orleans. He did not become marshal

of France until he had reached his forty-seventh year. He was a man of war only; for his education in letters was of the slenderest description. When the French Academy proposed to admit him as a member, which he had the good sense to decline, he wrote to a friend, "Ils veule me fere de la Cademie; sela miret come une bage a un chas."

Vauban was naturally led to the study of fortification while pursuing his career as a soldier. He entered the army under Condé at seventeen, and was with him at Clermont in Lorraine while the fortifications there were in progress. This circumstance gave the direction to his studies, which he prosecuted with great assiduity. It was during his active services in the field, in the course of which he displayed great bravery and did many daring acts in sight of the enemy, that he prepared and composed his great work on fortification. The last of his books was only finished a few days before his death, which occurred at seventy-four, while he was engaged in superintending the formation of an entrenched camp extending from Dunkirk to Bergues. Besides his important works on fortification, Vauban left behind him no fewer than twelve folio volumes of manuscript entitled *Oisiveté*. He was a man who would never lose a minute, but turned every moment to account.

The two great Swedish commanders—Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII.—were both very young men when they first gave evidence of their military capacity. Gustavus succeeded to the crown of Sweden in his seventeenth year. He had no sooner assumed the reins of government than his country was invaded by Sigismund, King of Poland, who also laid claim to his throne. At the same time another part of his dominions was attacked by the Russian Czar. But Gustavus, after a war extending over nine years, succeeded in defeating both, and also in annexing Riga and part of

Livonia. While this war raged, the Austrians had violated the Swedish territory. This led to a declaration of hostilities, and a furious war ensued,—the army of Gustavus forming the rallying point of the oppressed Protestants of Germany. The Swedish army completely defeated the Austrians on the plains of Leipsic; and after an extraordinary series of battles, Gustavus Adolphus died on the field of Lutzen in the moment of victory, in his thirty-eighth year.

The career of Charles XII. was still more remarkable, though his valour and generalship were marred by self-will and rashness. Charles became King of Sweden at fifteen. When he had reached eighteen a league was formed against him by the Czar of Russia, the King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, and the King of Denmark,—the object of these monarchs being the dismemberment of Sweden. Charles immediately embarked his army, sailed for Copenhagen, besieged the city, and in a few weeks compelled the King of Denmark to sue for peace. He next turned upon Russia, embarked, and landed his army of eight thousand men in Livonia, marched upon the Russians then besieging Narva with ten times the number of soldiers, and after a sharp struggle completely defeated them. Charles was then only in his eighteenth year. He next turned his arms against Augustus, King of Poland, and after repeatedly defeating the Polish army, he deposed Augustus and set up another king in his stead. Charles's ambition was only inflamed by his marvellous successes. Instead of resting satisfied with the castigation he had inflicted on his enemies, he now aimed at the dethronement of Czar Peter, his great rival and enemy. Crossing the Niemen, he defeated the Russians at Grodno, and next on the banks of the Beresina. His enemies disappeared, but winter approached; and the

same disasters fell upon him and his army which afterwards ruined Napoleon. His troops suffered from cold, hunger, disease, and privations of all kinds; and in this reduced and exhausted state, the Czar fell upon the Swedes with double the number of well-appointed troops at Pultawa, and completely routed them. The rest of Charles's life was a romance. He took refuge in Turkey; made his escape from it after four years; reached Stralsund, Pomerania, in sixteen days; took the field against Prussia, Denmark, Saxony, and Russia—all leagued against him; then escaped from Stralsund, and reached Sweden, after an absence of some fifteen years. He raised an army of twenty thousand men; invaded Norway, then united to Denmark; and, after varying successes, his career was cut short; for, while inspecting the trenches near Frederichshall, which he was besieging, he was struck in the head by a shot, and died instantly, in his thirty-seventh year.

Frederick the Great of Prussia was another great young man of history. While a youth, he was treated with so much coarseness and brutality by his father, that the wonder is that anything good could ever be made of him. The early disinclination which he showed for military exercises, and his hankering after French literature, music, and the fine arts, especially disgusted his father, who shut him up in prison, and is even said to have at one time contemplated his execution. But the death of the old savage in 1740, placed young Frederick on the throne at twenty-eight; and in the following year he took the field against Austria, and won the battle of Mollwitz, which decided the fate of Silesia. Two years later, we find him again at war with Austria, and victorious in the battles of Hohenfriedburg and Sorr, on which the second Silesian war was brought to a triumphant close in his thirty-third year. But the Seven Years' War, in

the course of which he gave the most striking evidences of his military genius, did not commence until he had reached his forty-fourth year. He won the battle of Rosbach at forty-five; his last great battles were Zorndoff when he was forty-six, and Torgan when he was forty-eight; after which his military career was a comparative blank. The result of his campaigns was the enlargement of his kingdom, and the establishment of Prussia as a first-class power in Europe.

Nearly all the generals of the French Revolution were young men. Napoleon was only twenty-four when he commanded the artillery at the siege of Toulon, the capture of which was mainly due to the skill with which he conducted the operations. At twenty-six he fought and won the battle of the Sections in the streets of Paris. In the following year he successfully led the French army in its first Italian campaign, capturing Milan and winning the battle of Lodi, which gave the French possession of Lombardy. He then overran South Italy, and turned northward to meet old Wurmser, who was advancing from the Tyrol with a large army. But the young and active French general proved more than a match for his veteran opponent, and he out-generalled and defeated him again and again. As in the case of Henry of Navarre and the Duc de Mayenne, Napoleon had always five hours' start of his aged rival; and he afterwards declared that he beat the Austrians because they did not know the value of time. The old generals boasted of their greater professional experience; but their experience had become ossified into pedantic maxims, and while they reasoned about the proper method of conducting war, their dashing and energetic youthful opponent suddenly overthrew them. They could only conclude, in their arguments, that they had been most improperly beaten.

After his short campaign in Egypt, Buonaparte returned to France, was appointed First Consul, and again crossed the Alps to contend with the Austrians, who were overrunning Italy. At thirty he won the battle of Marengo; and the "child of victory" went on from one battle to another, reconquering Italy, overrunning Austria, Prussia, and the provinces of the old German Empire. At last he was brought to a halt by the snows of Russia. As long as his youth lasted, he was great; but when age came upon him, his activity and energy departed. After a warfare lasting for about twenty-three years, Napoleon was at last baffled and beaten on the field of Waterloo in his forty-sixth year. French writers allege that by this time his age and fatness were telling against him, and that, but for his lying in bed when he ought to have been active and stirring on the morning of the 17th of July 1815, immediately after the battle of Ligny, he would have crushed Wellington unsupported by Blucher, and won the Belgian campaign. He was, however, beaten, not by younger men, but by generals who could get up in the morning earlier than he did.

Napoleon's best generals were for the most part young. Indeed the wars of the French Revolution are but a continuous record of old generals beaten by younger ones. The brilliant Hoche was made general in command of the army of the Moselle at the age of twenty-four. Humbert was general of brigade at twenty-six. Kleber and Lefevre were both generals at thirty-nine. Lannes was general of brigade at twenty-eight. Victor was "chef de bataillon" at twenty-five. Soult commanded a brigade at twenty-nine. St. Cyr was general of division at thirty. Murat commanded Napoleon's cavalry at twenty-nine. Ney, "the Indefatigable," was adjutant-general at twenty-five, and general of brigade at twenty-seven. Indeed, one of our military writers has

been recently urging that none but young and active generals should take the field—that no man above fifty should be put in command of a large army in actual warfare. Modern English history furnishes many illustrations of youthful generalship. At the beginning of many of our wars, toothless generals and paralytic admirals have represented us by land and sea; but we have been beaten into the employment of younger men, in the full possession of their physical and mental faculties.

The two youngest English commanders in modern times were General Wolfe and Sir John Moore. Wolfe attained the rank of regimental major at twenty-two, and he was placed in command of the expedition to Quebec at thirty-one. Yet Pitt, who selected him for the post, was not without great misgivings as to his ability.[1] Wolfe, however,

[1] Earl Stanhope relates a curious anecdote about General Wolfe which, he observes, "affords a striking proof how much a fault of manner may obscure and disparage high excellence of mind. . . . After Wolfe's appointment, and on the day preceding his embarkation for America, Pitt, desirous of giving his last verbal instructions, invited him to dinner—Lord Temple being the only other guest. As the evening advanced, Wolfe, heated perhaps by his own aspiring thoughts and the unwonted society of statesmen, broke forth into a strain of gasconade and bravado. He drew his sword; he rapped the table with it; he flourished it round the room; he talked of the mighty things which that sword was to achieve. The two ministers sat aghast at an exhibition so unusual from any man of real sense and real spirit; and when at last Wolfe had taken his leave, and his carriage was heard to roll from the door, Pitt seemed for the moment shaken in the high opinion which his deliberate judgment had formed of Wolfe. He lifted up his eyes and arms, and exclaimed to Lord Temple, 'Good God! that I should have entrusted the fate of the country and of the administration to such hands!' Lord Stanhope truly remarks that Wolfe's extraordinary conduct on the occasion confirms Wolfe's own avowal, that he was not seen to advantage in the common occurrences of life; and shows how shyness may at intervals rush, as it were for refuge, into the opposite extreme."

closed his career with glory by the brilliant capture of Quebec, at the early age of thirty-three. The promotion of Sir John Moore was slower than that of Wolfe; though, like him, he was distinguished for the zeal with which he devoted himself to the study of his profession, and the conscientious labour which he gave to mastering its various details. He reached the rank of brigadier-general at thirty-three; led the landing at Aboukir at forty-one, and commanded the noble but disastrous retreat at Corunna at forty-seven,—the French officers attesting their admiration of his worth by erecting a monument over his grave.

It is principally in India that our young soldiers have had the best opportunities for distinguishing themselves. Robert Clive, the dunce and reprobate at school, was sent out to India in the Civil Service at the age of nineteen. He did not distinguish himself as a clerk, and after fretting and fuming at Madras for two years, he left the civil for the military service, which suited him much better. He obtained an ensigncy, and entered upon his military career at twenty-one, distinguishing himself at the siege of Pondicherry. The courage and ability which he displayed elicited the admiration of his superiors, and he was recommended for promotion. When the war in the Carnatic broke out, Clive submitted a plan of operations, which was adopted, and he was himself entrusted with its execution. At twenty-five, he took the field with an army comparatively insignificant, mustering only some five hundred English and Sepoys, but led by a youth of intrepid genius. He seized Arcot, beat the French under their veteran commanders, and after a series of battles and victories, he brought the war to a successful conclusion. He returned to England at twenty-seven, tried to enter Parliament, but failed, and returned to India to prosecute his military

career. His first service was to reduce the piratical stronghold of Gheriah; his next, to recover Calcutta, where Sujah-u-Dowlah had thrown his prisoners into "The Black Hole"; and his last was to capture Chandernagore, and suppress the power of the barbarous nabob. With an army of three thousand men, of whom only a thousand were English, he fought and won the memorable battle of Plassy, against an army of forty thousand infantry and fifteen thousand cavalry. He was only in his thirty-second year when he achieved this last and crowning feat of his life,—which virtually laid the foundation of the British power in India.

Wellington gathered his first laurels in the same field. This great general was anything but a precocious boy, for his mother regarded him as a dunce, and treated him with marked neglect.[1] He made little progress at Eton, where he was considered dreamy, idle, and shy. He had, however, to fight his way. One of his fights was with Sydney Smith's brother "Bobus," whom he thrashed. But he was not always so successful. Mr. Gleig says that he was fairly vanquished by a young blacksmith, though not till after both had been severely punished. The blacksmith lived to an old age, and was very proud of having beaten the man before whom Napoleon and his best generals had gone down. Wellington had no special talent; indeed, the only talent he displayed was playing the violin. He displayed no desire to enter the army, but inclined to the life of a civilian. A commission was, however, obtained for him in the 41st Foot, and he entered the army as ensign at eighteen. Ten years later we find him in India as Colonel of the 33rd Foot. His steadiness, industry, application, and business qualities as an administrator, by this time com-

[1] Gleig's *Life of Wellington* (ed. 1864), p. 3.

manded general admiration. The Mahratta War having broken out, he had at last an opportunity of exhibiting his military capacity. In his thirty-fourth year, he fought and won the battle of Assaye, with eight thousand men, of whom only fifteen hundred were Europeans, against the Mahratta army consisting of fifty thousand men. The exploit was of almost as much importance as that performed by Clive at Plassy. According to Wellington himself, "It was the hardest fought affair that ever took place in India." At forty, Wellington was placed in command of the army in Portugal, and during four years he conducted that great campaign. At forty-six he fought at Waterloo; the whole of his military career, in the capacity of commander, being comprised within a period of only about twelve years.

Of the other young English commanders in India, the most remarkable were Nicholson, Hodson, and Edwardes. The last exhibited all the promptitude and valour of Clive, together with a purity and nobility of character, to which the other had but slender claim. Edwardes was serving as lieutenant on the Sikh frontier at the age of twenty-nine, when the rebellion broke out at Mooltan. By the rapid concentration of the troops at his disposal, Edwardes met and defeated the Moolraj against tremendous odds in two pitched battles, and forced him to take refuge in his citadel, which was besieged, stormed, and taken with great rapidity and courage.

Although, as we shall afterwards find, many generals of renown have flourished late in life,—because it was only then that the opportunities for distinction presented themselves,—young commanders have usually exhibited in greater affluence those qualities of promptitude, decision, vigorous action, and effort—that complete and instantaneous command of resources in body and mind—which are natural

to young men, and so essential to success in war. The eye of the young man is keener in detecting the weak points of his opponent, and his arm is more prompt to strike. The older general is more apt to wait—to stand upon routine and rules; his experience ossifying into pedantry, which younger men disregard, provided they can win battles. Wurmser fought by rule and failed: Napoleon broke through all his rules and succeeded. The youthful general makes his own rules according to circumstances, which he masters by the quick instinct of intelligence and genius. Napoleon himself was eventually defeated in defiance of his own rules,—the constantly repeated crushing force of heavy battalions,—alleging that the English at Waterloo ought to have been vanquished, but that they did not know when they were beaten.

A man may not have the opportunity of distinguishing himself until late in life; but he must possess the qualities, though latent, of doing so when the time arrives. What a man is enabled to do in advanced life, is for the most part the result of what he has been preparing himself for in his youth. Yet many of the greatest geniuses never saw the age of forty; indeed, Goethe has expressed the opinion that men rarely, if ever, adopt any new and original view after reaching that age. Raphael, Mozart, Schubert, Rossini, Tasso, Keats, Shelley, Byron, and others, had executed their immortal creations long before forty. Shakespeare wrote his *Hamlet* about the age of thirty-six, and it is doubtful whether he afterwards surpassed that work. Most great men, even though they live to advanced years, have merely carried into execution the conceptions of their youth. The discovery of Columbus originated in the thoughts and studies of his early life. Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation was made at twenty-five, and he carried out no

new work after forty-four. Watt made his invention of the condensing steam-engine at thirty-two, and his maturer years were devoted to its perfection.

Youth is really the springtime of inspiration, of invention, of discovery, of work, and of energy; and age brings all into order and harmony, All new ideas are young, and originate for the most part in youth-hood, when the mind is thoroughly alert and alive, ready to recognise new truths; and though great things may be done after forty,—new inventions made, new books written, new thoughts elaborated,—it is doubtful whether the mind really widens and enlarges after that age. There is indeed much truth in the saying of Montaigne that "Our Souls are Adult at Twenty. A Soul that has not by that time given evident earnest of its Force and Virtue, will never after come to proof." And again: "Of all the great Humane Actions I ever heard or read of, of what sort soever, I have observed, both in former Ages and our own, more perform'd before the age of Thirty than after; and oft-times in the very Lives of the same Men. . . . The better half of their Lives they lived upon the Glory they had acquired in their Youth; great Men after, 'tis true, in comparison of others; but by no means in comparison of themselves. As to my own particular, I do certainly believe, that since that Age, both my Understanding and my Constitution have rather decayed than improved, and retired rather than advanced. 'Tis possible, that with those who make the best use of their Time, Knowledge and Experience may grow up and increase with their Years; but the Vivacity, Quickness, and Steadiness, and other pieces of us, of much greater Importance, and much more essentially our own, languish and decay."[1]

[1] *Essays of Montaigne*, book i. chap. lvii.: "Of Age."

CHAPTER IV

GREAT OLD MEN

Call him not old whose visionary brain
Holds o'er the past its undivided reign;
For him in vain the envious seasons roll
Who bears eternal summer in his soul.—
Dr. Oliver Wendel Holmes.

O hours more blest than gold,
By whose blest use we lengthen life, and free
From drear decays of age, outlive the old.—Anna Seward.

Don't let your heart grow cold, and you may carry cheerfulness and love with you into the teens of your second century, if you can last so long.—
Dr. O. W. Holmes.

Contentment in old age is deserved by him alone who has not lost his faith in what is good, his persevering strength of will, and his desire for active employment.—
Turganief.

Everything comes, if a man will only wait.—Beaconsfield.

JOHNSON said of Goldsmith, after his death, that "he was a plant that flowered late; there was nothing remarkable about him when he was young." Men are like plants; many of them flower late. The plants that flower the soonest are often the most evanescent. Early in the year the anemones, crocuses, and snowdrops appear. Then come the daffodils "that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty." The sweet violets accompany them—the "violet by a mossy stone, half hidden from the eye." The lady's-smock, hare-

bell, and lily of the valley follow. They appear in leaping, bounding spring—full of fountains, buds, birds, sweetbriars, and sunbeams. The Primrose Day is on the 19th of April. Then comes lusty, full-blown summer, when plants and flowers abound. The rose begins in June, is glorious in July, and flourishes to the end of autumn. The chrysanthemums, dahlias, and sunflowers glorify the close of the year. The frost of winter comes, and there is an end of flowers; though there is still the Christmas rose.

Although great men are often heralded by the promises of their youth, it is not always so; for, like Goldsmith, many flower late in life. The powers of men's brains vary according to their temperaments. Some are quick, others are slow; some are sanguine, others are lymphatic. Some boys of naturally good powers make no progress at school, while others of quicker growth completely outstrip them. Yet the former may be all the stronger and more durable in their completed manhood; as the slow-growing oak is stronger and more durable than the quick-growing larch.

It has even been held by some that prematurely clever boys and girls prove failures in actual life, and often achieve nothing more than ill-health and mediocrity. Hazlitt thought it a disadvantage for a boy to distinguish himself at school. He held that "any one who has passed through the regular gradations of a classical education and is not made a fool by it, may consider himself as having had a very narrow escape."[1] The grave and austere Crebillon, though possessed of good abilities, was pronounced "an idle rascal" at school; and after he had been at college, the following memorandum stood against his name in the register: "Puer ingeniosus, sed insignis nebulo."

Lord Cockburn, the well-known Scotch judge, author of

[1] *Table Talk:* "On the Ignorance of the Learned."

The Life of Lord Jeffrey, said of himself that he never got a single prize, and once sat *boobie* at the annual public examination of the High School at Edinburgh. His lordship has accordingly a kind word to say for Dunces. "The same powers," he said, "that raise a boy high in a good school, make it probable that he will rise high in life. But in bad schools, it is very nearly the reverse. And even in the most rationally conducted, superiority affords only a gleam of hope for the future. Men change, and still more boys. The High School distinctions very speedily vanished in actual life; and fully as much by the sinking of the luminaries who had shone in the zenith, as by the rising of those who had been lying on the horizon. I have ever since had a distrust of duxes, and thought boobies rather hopeful."[1]

Lord Cockburn shows that the boy's interest in his lessons, and his progress at school, depend partly upon the character of the master, but principally upon the character of the boy himself. He says that he was "driven stupid" by a bad schoolmaster, and so was his friend James Nasmyth, the engineer, as related in his Autobiography. These bad schoolmasters seem to have been unacquainted with the nature of youth, ignorant of the character of boys, and without any conception of the art of encouraging them to learn—trusting mainly to the lash. Lord Cockburn says that during the four years that he remained under his merciless giant, "there were probably not ten days in which he was not flogged at least once."

Many boys of robust constitution are naturally fonder of playing than of learning. To sit down and learn lessons from books is in a measure contrary to their nature. Hence the sickly boy, possessed of a retentive memory, and without any love for outdoor sports, will usually stand high in his

[1] Lord Cockburn, *Memorials of his Time*, pp. 11, 12.

class. Though he may carry away the prizes, the other will carry away what is still more important—a stock of physical health; and it often happens that the positions of the two boys at school are completely reversed in actual life. Sir William Hamilton declared that senior wranglers applied so assiduously to mathematics that they became little better than idiots in the ordinary affairs of life; but, as we have elsewhere seen, this is not always, indeed very rarely, the case.

One cannot tell to what height a dull boy may grow. He must have time to develop. Experience only brings to light his real tastes and sympathies. It may be that he has been put into a wrong groove by his parents. Guido was sent to a music-master to be made a musician; Benvenuto Cellini played second horn with his father in a band; Guercino was apprenticed to a stone-mason; Claude Lorraine to a pastry-cook, and Molière to an upholsterer. But being strong in character, and decided in their bent, they broke away from the pursuits to which their parents had destined them, and each carved out his own career. They were of course helped by others. Thus Giotto, the shepherd boy, was found by Cimabue drawing a sheep with a sharp stone on a piece of slate. He took him away from his humble calling, and introduced him to art. Canova, too, first revealed his genius by modelling a lion out of a roll of butter, for the Senator Falieri of Venice; and he was, on the recommendation of the latter, received into the studio of Bernardi Toretti, whom he soon completely surpassed.

Although the traits and dispositions of the boy often afford indications of his future character, it is impossible to predict what the future man will be. The child is not always the father of the man. Signs of promise are not to be relied on; nor are predictions of failure always fulfilled.

The precocious boy may prove a mediocre man, and the precocious girl may prove a commonplace woman. Yet the dunce, from whom nothing is expected, may turn out to be a brilliant explorer, warrior, investigator, or man of science. Look into the kaleidoscope of biography, and you find the most singular transformations. One would scarcely expect to find in the poor miner's boy, singing carols through the streets at Erfurt, Martin Luther, the German reformer; or in the ill-used sickly boy, serving beer in a German cabaret, the philosopher and astronomer Kepler, one of the greatest men of his time; or in that young soldier, who spent his youth in battles and sieges, the great Descartes, one of the most original of thinkers, who actually conceived, during his garrison life, the project of reforming the whole system of human philosophy. In that dark-browed gipsy—tinker, soldier, and gaol-bird—behold John Bunyan, author of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. In that gentle, modest, reserved page-boy, you see the brilliant painter, Peter Paul Rubens. But who is this, leader of rapscallions, robber of orchards, and climber of church steeples? No other than the heroic and sagacious Clive, founder of the British power in India! And next, whom have we in the sweet and patient orphan child, whose little hands the good Abbé Prozart presses between his own, kissing the mild forehead of the boy? No other than Maximilian Robespierre!

The clever and diligent boy often fulfils the promise of his youth; though, if wanting in application, he may turn out to be a very indifferent man; whereas the boy of no promise at all, may achieve distinction and eminence, especially if he possess patient application and perseverance. Strong, healthy boys are naturally more attracted to outdoor sports than to indoor learning, finding it a very irksome task to pore over dry books and commit hard lessons to

memory, while their nature longs for the open air and outdoor life. Yet, as we have seen, the boy often becomes the very reverse of what he promised to be. Who would have expected to find St. Augustine, the "Doctor of Grace" as he was called, a youthful voluptuary in early life; or that Theodore de Beza, the elegant translator of the New Testament into Latin, should have been principally known in his youth for the wantonness and indecency of his verses? Two of the most reckless young gamblers in France eventually became the greatest cardinals and statesmen of their time—Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin?[1]

When the three Boileaus were boys, their father, Giles, the Registrar, thus described them: "There is Gilot, who is a braggart, and Jaco a rake, while as for Colin, he is a simple soul, who has not a bad word to say of anybody." Yet Gilot, the braggart, obtained a seat in the French Academy; Jaco, the rake, became a canon in the Sainte Chapelle; and Colin became a poet and satirist, the friend of Racine, Molière, and La Fontaine.

Nor are the performances of young men at college to be relied on as evidence of what they are capable of accomplishing when their powers have become developed and matured. To lie fallow, suits minds as well as soils; indeed, heavy cropping proves impoverishing in the long run. Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon, was by no means indus-

[1] "Some who afterwards beheld Mazarin's composure during many a trying crisis of his career, remembered with what equanimity he had borne in youth a long run of ill-fortune at the gaming-table. He was wont to say, 'che ad nomo splendido il cielo è tresorio'; and he certainly sometimes drew largely on his balance. On one occasion, he lost everything he possessed except a pair of silk stockings; he pawned them to raise a few pieces in order to try his luck again. His confidence was rewarded, and he soon won back the rest of his wardrobe."—*Edinburgh Review*, January 1866.

trious in his youth. He learnt very little at college, where his time was chiefly spent in gay and dissipated company. Nor was it until he had married and become chastened by sorrow, occasioned by the death of his wife, that he applied himself diligently to the study of law and literature, in which, as well as in legislation, he achieved a high reputation.

Bishop Warburton was thought to be a very stupid boy; one of his masters describing him as "the dullest of all dull scholars." Warburton, however, had faith in himself. "I know very well," he said to a friend who taxed him with being dull and uninventive, "I know very well what you and others think of me; but I believe that I shall, some day or other, convince the world that I am not so ignorant or so great a fool as I am believed to be." When he wrote and published his *Divine Legation*, his former teacher could scarcely believe that so great a work could proceed from so thick a skull.

Even the Rev. Mr. Malthus, a man of original powers, when at Cambridge, was principally distinguished for his love of fighting for fighting's sake. Dr. Paley was a still more remarkable instance of the performances of manhood contradicting the unfavourable promises of youth. Though his parents were in moderate circumstances, and he had to make his own way in the world, Paley was one of the idlest and most dissipated of youths during his first two years at Cambridge. He lay in bed until noon, and spent much of his time at fairs, visiting the strolling players and puppet shows. He was suddenly roused from his torpor and frivolity by one of his companions, a rich and dissipated fellow, who stood by his bedside one morning at four o'clock, and startled him by saying: "What a fool you are! I have the means of dissipation, and can afford to be idle.

You are poor, and cannot afford it. I should do nothing even if I were to apply myself. You are capable of doing everything, and rising to eminence. I have been kept awake all night by this thought, and have come solemnly to warn you." This admonition, so singular and unexpected, turned the whole tide of Paley's life. He formed resolutions which he had never done before. Instead of idling in bed half the day, he determined to rise at five. He kept his resolutions, studied hard, and at the end of the year came out senior wrangler.

Nicholas Breakspeare was plucked at college, having been rejected in his "little-go"; but he possessed diligence and perseverance, and applying himself to study with renewed application, he rose to one dignity after another, and ended as Pope, under the title of Adrian IV.—the only Englishman who ever attained that great dignity. At a much later date, Nassau Senior, when he first went in for examination at Oxford, was "plucked"; but, determined to succeed, he vigorously applied himself to his studies, and six months after his defeat, he came out with the highest honours which the examining masters could confer.

Dryden made no figure either at school or college. Indeed, he distinguished himself mostly by his irregularities. When about thirty, he went up to London in Norwich drugget; and his necessities, rather than his natural impulse, led him to embark on the sea of letters. For seventeen years he maintained himself by writing for the stage, after which—from his fiftieth to his sixty-ninth year—he produced the great works for which he is now celebrated. It was only late in life that he displayed the energy and rapture of imagination which are usually thought to be the characteristics of youth.

Swift, like Goldsmith, was a "plant that flowered late."

Swift was quite undistinguished as a student while at Trinity College, Dublin; and he only obtained his degree of B.A. *speciali gratia*. Excepting a few immature poetical essays, he gave no evidence of intellectual power. His first pamphlet on "Dissensions in Athens and Rome," was published when he was thirty-four, and excited no attention. Three years later, his *Tale of a Tub* appeared, and he at once became famous.

Goldsmith was an especially dull boy. He was declared to be stupid, indolent, and a blockhead. The French would have called him *un étourdi*. His ungainly appearance made him the butt of his school, and he was nicknamed "Esop." He was sent to Trinity College at seventeen, but he made little progress. He graduated at twenty-one, coming out "wooden spoon"—standing lowest in the list of B.A. for the year. He went to Edinburgh, and studied medicine. Then he went to Leyden, a famous medical school; after which he wandered over Europe, supporting himself by playing the flute. At twenty-eight he settled in London, where he was first employed by an apothecary; then he went as an usher to teach in a school; at thirty, he offered himself at the College of Surgeons at a time when the examination was very easy, but he was rejected. Then he became an author by compulsion. "The door of Surgeons' Hall was shut upon him," says Forster, "but the gate of the beautiful mountain was slowly opening." At thirty-six, he brought out *The Traveller*, which had been begun many years before; he also wrote *The Vicar of Wakefield*, which Johnson sold to Newberry in order to save Goldsmith from arrest—and from this time he was famous. *The Deserted Village* was not published until his forty-second year. Goldsmith was rather laughed at during his lifetime. Walpole called him an "inspired idiot." Johnson,

who was always his friend, said of him, "No man was more foolish when he had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he had one."

Charles James Fox said to Sir Joshua Reynolds that *The Traveller* "was one of the finest poems in the English language."[1] Yet it was not a poem of passion, but of observation, experience, and reflection. It was very much like Goldsmith himself, as expressed in the first line of the poem, "Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow." The poets of passion have for the most part written early and died young—like Keats, Shelley, and Byron; while poets of intellect, like Milton, Goethe, Wordsworth, wrote late in life, and lived to a mature age. Byron, however, was by no means a precocious boy. When, by some chance-correct reply, he was sent to the top of his class, the master would say, "Now, Geordie, man, let me see how soon you will be at the foot again."

Some young poets have owed their inspiration to falling in love. John Evald, the distinguished Danish poet, was a great reader when a boy. His favourite books were *Robinson Crusoe* and *Tom Jones*. The former made him in love with the sea and sea life, and he left home at thirteen to make his way to Holland, from whence he expected to set sail for Batavia. But he was overtaken, and his plans were frustrated. He returned to Copenhagen, and proceeded to fill his mind with northern fable and mythology. He suddenly became violently enamoured of a young lady, and described his passion in the most glowing colours; but she gave her hand to another, and left him alone lamenting. He determined to become a soldier, and joined the Prussian service. After various military adventures he returned to Denmark, his mind being still affected by melancholy, through

[1] Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, chap. lxiii. (edited by Croker).

the failure of his first love. Sympathy is often taught by affliction, and difficulties and disappointments are sometimes necessary to evoke a man's best powers. Evald consoled himself with poetry. He wrote many noble works, but his masterpiece, *Balder's Död* (the Death of Balder), is considered superior to anything which has appeared in the Danish language.

Steele and Coleridge were both soldiers in early life. After leaving Merton College, Oxford, Steele enlisted as a private soldier in the Guards; but the colonel of the regiment, after ascertaining his merits, presented him with an ensign's commission. He afterwards got the command of a company. Steele particularly distinguished himself at the attack on the Castle of Namur, as well as during the siege of Venloo. He left the army at thirty, and began writing comedies for the stage. He afterwards started *The Tatler*, and was the principal contributor to that periodical, as well as to *The Spectator*.

Coleridge says that he spent from his tenth to his eighteenth year at a rough school in London. This was Christ's Hospital; though it must have been a pleasure to him to have had Charles Lamb among his companions. "His nature," he himself says, "was repressed, wronged, and drawn inward. At fourteen, I was in a continual state of low fever." He made great progress, however, in classical knowledge, and before his fifteenth year he translated the hymns of Synesius into English anacreontics. In his nineteenth year he entered Jesus College, Cambridge. He obtained a prize for a Greek ode, and distinguished himself in the contest for the Craven Scholarship. But he did not stay long at Cambridge. During his second year he suddenly left the university in a fit of despondency. He had fallen deeply in love, and his ardent affection was unrequited.

After wandering about London in extreme pecuniary distress, he enlisted in the 15th Dragoons under the assumed name of Comberbatch. One of the officers, accidentally discovering his classical acquirements, succeeded in effecting his discharge from the army. "I sometimes," said Coleridge to a friend, "compare my own life to that of Steele (yet oh! how unlike), from having myself also, for a brief time, written 'private' after my name, or rather another name; for, being at a loss when suddenly asked my name, I answered 'Cumberback,' and verily my habits were so little equestrian, that my horse, I doubt not, was of that opinion."

Coleridge returned to Bristol, and entered into arrangements with Cottle the publisher. His first volume of poems was published when he was twenty-four years old; his next, the *Lyrical Ballads*, in conjunction with Wordsworth, when he was twenty-six and Wordsworth was twenty-eight. The *Ancient Mariner* and the first part of *Christabel*—perhaps the finest of his imaginative works—were written the year before they were published,—that is, when Coleridge was twenty-five. His tragedy, *Remorse*, was also written at the same time. He ceased, for the most part, to compose poetry, and wrote for the press—principally for the *Morning Post* and *Courier*—after which he became a critic on metaphysics, poetry, the drama, and the fine arts, besides being a great converser and monologist. Wordsworth, the poet of feeling, observation, and intellect, wrote his *Excursion*, which exhibited perhaps the culmination of his genius, when he was forty-four; but he went on writing almost until his death, which occurred in his eightieth year.

It does not necessarily happen, as is sometimes alleged, that precocious brains become prematurely exhausted, and that clever boys fail in actual life. Some of the most precocious youths have been among the greatest of old men.

Wordsworth began to write verses while at school, and went on writing until eighty. Metastasio was very precocious. He wrote verses at ten, and produced his tragedy of *Guistino* at fourteen. He lived till eighty-four, and wrote poetry and dramas to the end of his life. Pallisot, so sickly in his childhood, was received master of arts at twelve, and bachelor of theology at sixteen. He married at nineteen, and became the father of a family, as well as the author of two tragedies; and at eighty, in spite of a very active and exciting life, he was still sound in health and full of vigour.

It is true, there are precocities that break down, such as Lord Chesterfield's son, who could write a theme in three languages when a boy, but who was a mere cypher when he became a man; William Crotch and Charles Wesley, the precocious musicians, who never got beyond mediocrity; Schubart, Schiller's friend, who promised so well, but turned out so ill;[1] Monk Lewis, who wrote his *East Indian* at sixteen, and his *Monk* at twenty, but did little after-

[1] Daniel Schubart was the prodigy and genius of his school, but turned out one of the most erratic, tumultuous, and riotous literary men of his day. He was without habits of application, without principles, without judgment. He promised to be a great poet, author, critic, and musician; but all his promises failed. He threw away his gifts; his genius degenerated into profligacy, and he died wretched. Carlyle says of him: "Schubart had a quick sense of the beautiful, the moving, and the true; his nature was susceptible and fervid; he had a keen intellect, a fiery imagination, and his 'iron memory' secured for ever the various produce of many gifts. But he had no diligence, no power of self-denial. His knowledge lay around him, like the plunder of a sacked city. Like this, too, it was squandered in pursuit of casual objects. He wrote in gusts; the *labor lincœ et mora* was a thing he did not know. Yet his writings have great merit. His newspaper essays abound in happy illustration and brilliant, careless thought. His songs, excluding those of a devotional and theosophic cast, are often full of nature, heartiness, and true simplicity. Hence their popularity, which many of them still retain" (*Life of Schiller*, Note A, ed. 1825).

wards to maintain the reputation of his youth; Sir James Mackintosh, so brilliant when a boy, but who remained a "man of promise" to the end;[1] the poet Clough, whose reputation amongst his fellow-collegians was so much greater than his achievements as a man.

At the same time, in the case of many of the precocities cited in the preceding pages, the promise of their youth was amply fulfilled in their maturer manhood, and even in their old age. Though Handel composed a set of sonatas at ten, he had reached forty-eight before he gave the world assurance of a man. He was fifty-four when he wrote *Israel in Egypt;* fifty-seven when he wrote *The Messiah;* sixty-seven when he wrote *Jephtha;* and seventy-four when he wrote his "Wise men flattering" and "Sion now lies dead," for introduction to the *Judas Maccabeus.*

The great musicians were more or less precocious—Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, and Rossini,—the instances being very rare in which musical genius has not early displayed itself. Perhaps the only exception, and that only partially, was in the career of Spohr, whose works have been regarded as the mathematics of music. And yet he must have devoted much study to the violin when young, as he gave concerts on that instrument when in his twenty-first year. He did not begin to compose until his thirty-first year, after which he published many important works. The finest offsprings

[1] The causes of his failure are epitomised by Lady Holland in the memoir of her father, the Rev. Sydney Smith. "Sir James Mackintosh," she says, "went after a few days, leaving behind not only recollections, but a hat, books, gloves, papers, and various portions of his wardrobe, with characteristic carelessness. 'What a man that would be,' said my father, 'had he a particle of gall, or the least knowledge of the value of red tape. As Curran said of Grattan, he would have governed the world.'"

of Haydn's genius had their birth after he had become a sexagenarian. He wrote his *Creation* when he was sixty-five, and his *Seasons* two years later. His last composition, a quartette (Op. 80), is perhaps the most original and exquisitely finished of all the works that proceeded from his pen. Rossini began early,—playing second horn to his father when only ten years old. He composed *Tancredi* at twenty-one, after which he produced a long succession of works, until he reached his last and greatest opera, *William Tell*, at the age of thirty-seven. With this he was supposed to have closed his musical career. To a friend he said: "An additional success would add nothing to my fame, a failure would injure it; I have no need of the one, and I do not choose to expose myself to the other." But after taking a long and indolent rest of about thirty-eight years, he composed his *Messe Solenelle*, which some musicians consider to be his masterpiece, at the age of seventy-two.

In the sister arts of painting and sculpture, we find Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Titian, alike great in youth and in age. Michael Angelo began his "Last Judgment" in his fifty-eighth year, and finished the work in his sixty-sixth year. He was eighty-seven when he raised the cupola of St. Peter's. Though Titian was a painter of celebrity at twenty, he continued painting until he was ninety-nine, when he was cut off by the plague. When he was seventy-seven, he finished his "Last Supper," which had occupied him for seven years. Francia was among the few artists who discovered his genius late in life. He was nearly forty, when the sight of a picture by Perugino fired his mind, and determined him to become a painter.

Hobbes and Bentham, not unlike in character, were alike great in youth and in age. While yet a boy, Hobbes translated the *Medea* of Euripides into Latin verse. He

learned much and easily, and before his twentieth year he was regarded as one of the most accomplished men of his time. In his fortieth year, he published a translation of Thucydides. At fifty-four, he wrote *De Cive*, originally published at Paris in Latin; and nine years later, the principles therein set forth were developed in his celebrated *Leviathan*, which appeared in English in his sixty-third year. He translated Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* when between seventy and eighty. Pope declares that the translation is "too mean for criticism." Yet Sir William Molesworth, who edited his works, thinks that "some readers may possibly find the unstudied and unpretending language of Hobbes convey an idea less remote from the original than the smooth and glittering lines of Pope and his coadjutors." He lived to ninety-two, and even towards the close of his life his pen was never idle. The year before his death, he published his *Behemoth*—a history of the Civil Wars from 1640 to 1660,—a very notable work.

Bentham was probably a greater prodigy. He was dwarfish in body[1] and precocious in mind. His father was proud of his learning, and so forced his mind by premature teaching, that the wonder is that he survived his boyhood. He was sent to Westminster School at eight, to Oxford at twelve, and was entered at Lincoln's Inn at sixteen. Hawked about by his father as a prodigy, the boy eventually conceived a disgust for society, and taking an aversion to law, his father (fortunately for Jeremy) all but abandoned him, in despair of his ever achieving anything in that profession. Then young Bentham took refuge in

[1] "I was at this time about sixteen; but still a dwarf—a perfect dwarf. I had no calfs to my legs; and one Mr. Harris, a Quaker, offended me not a little by asking me whither my calves were gone a-grazing."—Bowring, *Memoirs of Bentham*, p. 47.

books. A sentence in one of Dr. Priestley's pamphlets struck him—"The greatest happiness of the greatest number,"—and it formed the key of his life and labours. At twenty-eight he published anonymously his *Fragment on Government;* and it was attributed to some of the greatest legalists of the day. He went on writing upon religion, morals, jurisprudence, and prison discipline, until his eighty-fifth year; and his works have certainly had a considerable influence upon recent legislation, in England as well as in France.

Some of the greatest poets—not the poets of passion, but the poets of imagination and intellect—have produced their best works late in life. Milton, who wrote his *Comus* at twenty-six, lived to finish his *Paradise Lost* at fifty-seven, and his *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* at sixty-three. The precocious Pope, who composed his *Pastorals* at sixteen, wrote his most stinging satire, *The Dunciad*, at forty, and the *Essay on Man* at forty-five. But Pope was not so much a "maker," creator, or poet in the ordinary sense, as a highly-cultivated literary artist, who had the tact to set the ingenious thoughts of others into the most pithy and elegant language. Crabbe, too, who began writing verses at an early age, went on improving until he composed his *Village* at twenty-nine, his *Borough* at fifty-six, and the *Tales of the Hall* at between sixty and sixty-five.

Cowper did not know his own powers until he was far beyond thirty, and his *Task* was not written until about his fiftieth year. Sir Walter Scott was more than thirty before he published his *Minstrelsy;* and all his greatness was yet to come. Walter Savage Landor wrote and published his first volume of poems at eighteen, and his last—*The Last Fruit from an Old Tree*—at eighty. Goethe also furnishes another instance of the early growth of genius and its pro-

longed preservation into old age; for he wrote ghost comedies in verse while a boy, *Goetz von Berlichingen* at twenty-two, and then, as he grew in power, he produced his *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* at forty-seven, the first part of *Faust* at fifty-eight, *Wilhelm Meister's Wandergahre* between his seventy-second and eightieth year, and the second and last part of *Faust* at eighty-two. In addition to these great names, we may add Cervantes and Voltaire; the first of whom began writing ballads and romances before twenty, but reached the age of fifty-seven before he completed the first part of his immortal *Don Quixote;* and the last, who wrote *Œdipe* at nineteen, *The Henriade* at twenty-two, and after publishing numerous works, was found writing articles for the *Encyclopédie* at between seventy and eighty. At eighty-four he attended the sixth representation of his tragedy of *Irene*, and died about three months later, after his return to Ferney.

There have been poets, though not of the highest rank, whose powers were slow in displaying themselves, and who only became distinguished late in life. La Fontaine was one of these. At forty-four he had achieved no reputation. Not much attention had been paid to his education; but when he read an ode by Malherbe, he exclaimed, "I, too, am a poet." He wrote poems accordingly, but with comparatively little effect. It was Marianne Mancini, the niece of Cardinal Mazarin, who impressed upon the poet that his grace and strength lay in fable-making. He took the lady's advice. It is accordingly through his *Fables* that he is chiefly remembered. At sixty-three he was received into the Academy as successor to Colbert, triumphing over Boileau, the rival candidate. He died at seventy-four.

Krilov, who has been styled the Russian La Fontaine, after writing some unsuccessful operas and tragedies, dis-

covered, when about forty, where his true genius lay; and his *Fables*, like those of La Fontaine, achieved an extraordinary popularity. After writing about two hundred of them, he obtained a pension from the Emperor, and then fell into a trance of indolence or lethargy. He was roused from this state by a wager which he made with some one, that he could learn Greek. At the age of sixty-eight he applied himself to learn that language, which he mastered in about two years; and towards the close of his life, at seventy-six, he took pleasure in reading the Greek poets in the original.

Holberg, one of the principal Danish poets, gave no sign of a talent for poetry until he had passed his fortieth year, and then he astonished and delighted his countrymen by his satire of *Peder Paars*—that masterpiece of heroic-comic poetry. Vondel, the national poet of Holland, was a hosier. He learnt Latin at about thirty, and it had the effect of improving his poetic style. His masterpiece, *Gijsbrecht*, was written at the age of fifty. His *Lucifer* has been compared to Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

It must, however, be admitted that these are to be regarded as exceptional cases; for nearly all the great poets have given unmistakable signs of their genius in early life. "In general," says Macaulay, "the development of the fancy is to the development of the judgment what the growth of a girl is to the growth of a boy. The fancy attains at an earlier period to the perfection of its beauty, its power, and its fruitfulness; and as it is first to ripen, it is also first to fade. It rarely happens that the fancy and the judgment grow together. It happens still more rarely that the judgment grows faster than the fancy."

When the physical constitution attains its full growth, it does not long remain in that state, but gradually begins to

decline. Indeed, from the day on which we begin to live, we may be said to begin to die—digging our graves with our teeth. In youth there is change and growth; in age there is change and decay. When the ascending stage is fully reached, the descent begins. Strength and ardour gradually cease—of desires, of feelings, of passions, of fancy. But the intellect continues to grow with accumulations of knowledge. The attractions of the senses diminish, and the power which remains is used with greater economy and usually to better purpose. The brilliant dreams of youth have departed, and with them enthusiasm and energy. The man has cooled down; he reasons more soberly; and he is guided by experience more than in his earlier years. His organs, of body and mind, participate in the decay. They are less agile, impressionable, and energetic. The brain, like the body, desiccates and hardens. Man no longer sees the brighter side of things, but bears up less cheerfully under adversity. In the words of the Persian poet, "The tendency of age is to sharpen the thorns and wither the flowers of life."

During the period of maturity—or what Mr. Nasmyth in his Autobiography denominates "The Tableland of Life"—that is, between thirty and fifty, the functions of the body are in full development, and the mind is in its highest state of working energy. It is during that period that the greatest and maturest works of genius are produced. Macaulay says that "of all the good books now extant in the world, more than nineteen-twentieths were published after the writers had attained the age of forty." This, perhaps, may be too sweeping a statement, as we shall afterwards find. From what has already been said, the aptitude to labour varies according to constitution and temperament. Poesy and art achieve their greatest triumphs in youth, but

history and philosophy in age. The most inspired works are those which are usually conceived in early life. But in the most solid branches of literature and philosophy the reverse is the case. A man cannot accumulate the enormous mass of facts necessary for a great history until comparatively late in life. Hence most of the great historians have been men past the tableland of life.

M. Quetelet, the statistician, has prepared a table exhibiting the development of dramatic talent, and showing that it grows and declines according to age. At the average age of twenty-one it begins to display itself. Between twenty-five and thirty it becomes pronounced and grows in force. It continues to increase until between fifty and fifty-five, when it sensibly and rapidly declines, judging by the published works of well-known authors. It has also been observed that the tragic talent develops itself more rapidly than the comic.[1]

There are, however, numerous exceptions to statistical rules. The instances are numerous in which persons, even of feeble body and delicate health, have carried into old age the genius of their youth. Inspiration returns to them; light sparkles again in their eyes; and the soul of fire burns under their wrinkled brows. "Even in their ashes live their wonted fires." Sometimes the fruits of advanced years have even more flavour than those of youth. The *Odyssey* was produced by a blind old man, but that man was Homer. Bossuet was about sixty when he composed and delivered the most brilliant of his orations. Milton was almost "chilled by age" when he described the love of Adam and Eve in Paradise. Locke was actively engaged in literary composition until within a few days of his death, at seventy-

[1] Réveillé-Parise: *Physiologie des Hommes Livrés aux Travaux de L'Esprit*, i. pp. 232, 233.

three. Poussin was seventy when he painted his great picture of "The Deluge." West painted his last, said to be his best work, "Death on the Pale Horse," at seventy-nine.

Where the powers of the imagination are not concerned, the cases of dulness in youth and slowness of growth in manhood are very numerous. Who could have foretold from the unpromising boyhood of Bunyan—swearer, tinker, reprobate, and gaol-bird—the author of that wonderful allegory, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, so abounding in power, pathos, and beauty? But the wind of genius bloweth where it listeth. In the case of Bunyan, difficulties rather than facilities, obstructions rather than encouragements, seem to have been his most energetic helpers. Macaulay, one of the best of judges, affirmed that "though there were many clever men in England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were only two minds which presented the imaginative faculty in a very eminent degree. One of these minds produced the *Paradise Lost*, the other *The Pilgrim's Progress*."

Whitfield's case was almost as remarkable. A bad boy, a young thief, hating instruction, and utterly wicked, as described by himself, with only the evil examples of his mother's public-house before him, he yet lived to become one of the most powerful and successful of preachers. Nor was the early life of the Rev. John Newton, the friend of Cowper, more promising. At nineteen he was seized by a press-gang and put on board a ship of war. He was flogged and degraded for misconduct. He afterwards became a labourer on an estate in Western Africa, where he was almost killed by ill-treatment. But his sufferings, helped by the recollection of his mother's early instruction and example, softened his heart, and he became a changed man. Escaping from thraldom, he devoted his spare time to the improve-

ment of his mind; though for four years he was master of a slave-ship. His increasing dislike to that occupation preyed upon his mind, and he determined to leave it. Then he returned to England, applied himself diligently to study, acquired a knowledge of Latin and French, and eventually made considerable progress in Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac. At length he obtained episcopal ordination, and was presented to the curacy of Olney. There he laboured successfully for about sixteen years, during which he became the intimate friend of the poet Cowper, in conjunction with whom the well-known *Olney Hymns* were composed and published.

To these illustrations may be added the remarkable case of Richard Baxter, nephew of the celebrated Nonconformist divine, who did not know a letter at eighteen, and could only speak Welsh. But having had his mind awakened, he diligently applied himself to learning, and in the course of a few years acquired a high reputation as a scholar. He was eventually appointed Master of the Mercer's School, in London, and held that important office with great *éclat* for a period of about twenty years. He was a great author, especially in Latin and antiquarian works. His edition of *Horace* was for a long time considered to be the best; and it bore so high a character abroad that it was reprinted by Gesner at Leipsic with additional notes.

Alexander von Humboldt made very little progress at school. He was uncertain and slow; and it was only in later years, when his mind began to develop itself, that he conquered knowledge by sheer strength of will and force of application. When Diderot was a boy he was thought to be the scapegrace of the family, though he lived to be its glory. Buffon was by no means a prodigy in youth. His mind was slow in forming itself, and equally slow in reproducing what

it had acquired. Madame Neckar attributed the development of Buffon's talent to curiosity and vanity. She says of him: "Il ne voulait pas qu'un homme fût entendre ce qu'il n'entendait pas lui-même; il ne voulait rien ignorer de tout ce qu'il pouvait savoir, dans quelque genre qui ce fût." But, whatever may have been the motive, there can be no doubt that his reputation was achieved only by dint of extraordinary and persevering labour.

Fresnel, also, the natural philosopher, was a dull boy at school. "Il passait pour *un pas grand chose.*" It was with difficulty that he could be taught to read; and it was not until he had reached his twenty-fifth year that he gave any signs of ability; after which his discoveries on the subject of light and its laws, succeeded each other with unexampled rapidity. These discoveries were all made between his twenty-ninth and thirty-eighth years.

Pestalozzi was very awkward and unhandy in youth. He was very unsuccessful at school. He was so awkward that his schoolfellows called him "Harry Oddity." He was dull and unsusceptible, and long remained beneath mediocrity. In orthography and writing he was declared to be a confirmed dunce. Yet in later life he became a preacher. Pursued by his native awkwardness, he stuck fast in his first sermon. Striving to relieve his confusion, he burst into a loud laugh. This of course would never do. And yet, when he got into his right groove, he proved to be one of the greatest and wisest of teachers—the founder of the Pestalozzian system of education.

The late historian of the French Revolution, and President of the French Republic, was distinguished as a *mauvais sujet* at the Lyceum of Marseilles. His passion was principally for barley-sugar and green apples. He turned his books into cash to supply his wants. He played no end of

tricks, which made him the hero of his schoolfellows, but the terror of his schoolmasters. He stuck cobbler's wax upon one of the seats, which held the master fast, and set the class in a roar. He was put into the black hole, and was at length threatened with expulsion. As his parents were very poor, the threat led to his reformation. He became obedient and studious, and during the remainder of his school life he usually stood at the head of his class, and eventually carried off the first prizes. Every one knows the after history of M. Thiers.

Honoré de Balzac, when placed at school, was found to be so idle and disobedient that he was removed to a private academy, where he did little better. He was placed with a notary at Paris, though Michelet says he began business as a printer and bookseller. At all events he began to write for the public journals, and then he proceeded to write stories. But many years elapsed before the *Peau de Chagrin* called the public attention to his peculiar humour, and shortly after he became a general favourite.

Dumas, like Balzac, was an idle, good-for-nothing scholar, being chiefly remarkable for his love of out-door sports. He was a good fencer and wrestler, a first-rate shot, and a keen sportsman. But these accomplishments could not gain him a living. At fifteen he was placed as copying-clerk with a notary, and, as yet, he indicated no predilection for literature. His determination to embark in the craft of authorship was accidental. An acquaintance of his, who wrote for the theatre, proposed to him that they should unite their efforts, remarking that "writing for the theatre was a trade like every other, and only required practice." Dumas's first attempts were failures; but he persevered, and at length his *Henri III.* succeeded. His subsequent career proved a continued round of successes. He

wrote some eighty dramas, and more than forty works of fiction.

Even the brilliant Sheridan, when taken by his mother to a schoolmaster, was pronounced by her to be one of the most impenetrable dunces she had ever met with. He was boisterous, impetuous, and fond of fun and mischief. The death of his mother, which was his first sorrow, softened his heart. From that time he applied himself diligently, and eventually took rank among the great men of his country. John Howard, the philanthropist, made no progress at school; he was pronounced a dunce, and was apprenticed to a grocer. Fowell Buxton, also, was a dull boy, much fonder of shooting and hunting than of learning. But even in pursuing sport he was no loser, for he largely gained in health and strength.

Knowledge of school books may send a boy to the top of his class; but it is action, application, and endurance that carries a man to the front in actual life. Indeed, too exclusive an application to learning of any sort, while the youth is approaching manhood, and his habits are in course of formation, may to a certain extent unfit him for the business of practical life. Hence the stupidity of scholars and the ignorance of the learned, which Hazlitt has described with so much vigour and acuteness.[1]

Captain Marryat's education was very limited in youth, and he ran away to sea when he was only twelve years old. He himself told the following story of his own and Mr. Charles Babbage's school days: "The first school I ever went to was one kept by an old dame. There was a number of other boys there who were all very good boys, but Charlie Babbage and I were always the scamps of the school. He and I were for ever in scrapes, and the old woman used to

[1] Hazlitt, *Table-talk*: "Ignorance of the Learned."

place us side by side standing on stools in the middle of the schoolroom, and point to us as a warning to the others, and say, 'Look at those two boys! They are bad boys, and they will never get on in this world. Those two boys will come to a bad end.' It is rather funny," he concluded, "but Babbage and I are the only two in all the school who have ever been heard of since."

Many great warriors have been slow to learn in youth. Bertrand du Guesclin could never learn either to read or write. "Never was there so bad a boy in this world," said his mother; "he is always wounded, his face disfigured, fighting or being fought; his father and I wish he were peaceably under ground." Yet Du Guesclin readily apprehended military tactics, and lived to become a successful general.

The Duke of Marlborough, though his education was neglected, gave early indications of military genius; so much so that Marshal Turenne, to whom he was opposed, predicted that "the handsome Englishman" would one day prove a master in the art of war. Yet he reached the age of fifty before he had an opportunity of displaying his powers. After achieving a series of remarkable victories, he forced the French armies to retreat across the frontier. The Duke was fifty-four when he won the battle of Blenheim, fifty-six at Ramillies, and fifty-nine at Malplaquet, where he showed the extreme of military daring. He was as much as sixty-one when he stormed and captured the strong fortress of Bouchain.

Turenne himself, as we have seen, learned slowly and with difficulty, rebelling against punishment and restraint; but when his ambition was appealed to, his dogged perseverance made a good substitute for his slowness of apprehension. Clive was a dunce and a reprobate—a great

fighter,—the leader of all the idle boys of Market-Drayton, and the terror of his neighbourhood. Yet one of his teachers had the sagacity to predict that the idle but intrepid boy would yet make a figure in the world.

Wellington, who lived to be one of the greatest of generals and the safest of statesmen, completed his military course at Angers without attracting attention. He joined the army, and passed from the infantry to the cavalry twice and back again; after which he applied to Lord Camden, then Viceroy of Ireland, for employment in the Revenue or Treasury Boards. Fortunately, however, Lord Camden did not comply with his request. The result of his application was, that he joined the 33rd Regiment at the Cape of Good Hope, which proceeded from thence to Bengal in 1797. From that time the history of Wellington forms part of the history of Europe.

Although the Napiers were very far from being dull boys, they owed very little to school instruction. William, the historian of the Peninsular War, had for his master "a queer old pedagogue, head of the Grammar School at Cellbridge, from whom he learned nothing." He was educated partly by a female relative at home, but principally by himself. He had a good memory, and knew by heart the whole of Pope's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But his elementary education must have been very deficient, as he could not spell correctly at twenty. When a lieutenant of artillery, he wrote: "I am extreemely miserable at having made my father unneassy." Two years later, when a cornet of horse, he wrote: "Charles is a lazy theif, I wrote to him a week ago to send or come himself with my ten guineas, and has neither sent it nor answered me, the unatural villain." A year or two later, his letters became correct in orthography and grammar. They increased in force, style, and expres-

sion, and he eventually succeeded in becoming, without exception, the first military historian of his age. Charles, "the unatural villain," was the Paladin of the family. He was naturally timid as a boy, but he conquered his tendency by extraordinary force of will. He was a hero throughout his life, and to the last he remained just, unstained, honourable, pure, and merciful.

Sometimes boys are, like Lord Cockburn, thrashed into stupidity, and they make no progress until they are relieved from their schoolmasters, and left at liberty to discover their own bent. George Cabanis, when a boy, gave early indications of ability, but the severe discipline of the school to which his father sent him had only the effect of making him idle and stubborn, and he was at last expelled. His father, having observed that he was always a willing scholar when no compulsion was used, and that he was rigidly submissive to the rules imposed by himself, resolved on the hazardous experiment of leaving young Cabanis, at the age of fourteen, to pursue his studies in his own way. The experiment proved successful. In two years, the youth repaired the defects of his education at school; he made himself acquainted with the literature of his own country, and he studied Greek and Latin, philosophy and metaphysics, by turns, and all with equal ardour. After a time he became disabled by ill-health. The famous Dutreuil was called upon to attend him, and he induced the young man to follow the study of physic under his direction. For six years he remained under Dutreuil; and the eminence to which Cabanis eventually attained as a physician and physiologist amply justified the anticipations of his early friend and instructor.

Occasionally a boy, of really inventive genius, is considered stupid and *étourdi*, simply because his special ability

has had no opportunity of being brought to light. When Klaproth, the celebrated orientalist, was a student at Berlin University, he was thought particularly backward. One day his examiner said to him, "Why, sir, you know nothing at all." "I beg your pardon," answered Klaproth, "I know Chinese." The answer excited surprise as well as distrust. But, on inquiry, it was found that the boy, without help and in secret, had really mastered one of the most difficult of Eastern languages. This circumstance determined the direction of his studies and the pursuits of his future life. It was the same with Linnæus until his true genius was discovered. In school he was a dunce, but in the garden and the forest he was a prodigy. So also with Sir Joseph Banks, who was so immoderately fond of play when a boy that he learned next to nothing at school; but the beauty of the wild flowers in the lanes near Eton having attracted his wonder and admiration, he from that time devoted himself with the ardour of his nature to the study of botany and natural history.

The genius of General Menabrea, recently Prime Minister of Italy, early displayed itself in a remarkable manner. When a boy he was, for some misdemeanour, sentenced to solitary confinement in a remote room in his father's castle. He at once proceeded to make a breach in the partition wall, and never stopped until he had made his way back to his mother, powdered from head to foot with lime and brickdust. When sent to college at Turin, his devotion to mathematical studies was such that, to procure some costly scientific works on which he had set his heart, he sold the greater part of his clothes, and was surprised by his brother-in-law, Count Brunet, in the depth of winter, occupied in his calculations, arrayed in a light summer dress — the only part of his wardrobe that remained. Such were the early indications of the genius which afterwards displayed

itself in the conduct of the siege operations before Ancona and Gaeta, and which ended in the capture of those important fortresses.

There are also cases in which men seem to have lain fallow in their youth, and have only given evidences of their powers in middle life or even in old age. It is the nature of some minds as of some plants to arrive at maturity at different stages of life—some in springtime, some in full summer, and others in the autumn. At the same time, men often do not show what they can successfully accomplish because the opportunity has not yet presented itself. Though Cæsar did not attain to power until comparatively late in life, he had as a youth distinguished himself for his personal courage. He was made ædile at thirty-five and consul at forty-one, after which, at forty-two, he took the command of the Roman forces in Helvetia and Gaul. At fifty-two he fought and won the battle of Pharsalia over Pompey, who was then fifty-eight. Yet Cæsar was even greater as a statesman than as a general; and in his capacity of dictator, and afterwards as emperor, he, more than any other man, stamped his mind upon the policy and history of Imperial Rome.

Oliver Cromwell was far advanced in life before he gave any indications of his remarkable capacity as a soldier. He had experienced nothing of warfare before he was forty. He was first made captain of a troop at the age of forty-three, and a colonel at forty-four. In the following year, when placed in command of the Parliamentary horse, he was mainly instrumental in winning the victory of Marston Moor; and at forty-six he won the battle of Naseby. Indeed, as a soldier, he never lost a battle. At the age of fifty-four he was chosen Lord Protector of England.

One of his ablest coadjutors was Colonel, afterwards

Admiral Blake. He was middle-aged before he abandoned the quiet life of the country gentleman. After distinguishing himself as a soldier he was put in command of the Parliamentary fleet at the age of fifty-four, and in that capacity he met Van Tromp, who carried a broom at his mast-head in token of his sweeping the sea of the English ships. Blake compelled Van Tromp to haul down his broom; for he met him in the Straits of Dover, attacked and beat him, and compelled him to fly. Van Tromp was dismissed from his command, and was superseded by De Ruyter and Cornelius De Witt. But they fared no better at the hands of Blake. He made prizes of the Dutch homeward-bound merchantmen, cleared the Channel of the Dutch ships, and drove their fleet into port. Van Tromp was again appointed admiral, and crossed the Channel to meet Blake's forty ships with eighty men-of-war. Blake was beaten on this occasion, and Van Tromp hoisted his broom again. But not for long. Blake put to sea again with eighty ships, and after a long fight, which continued during three successive days, Blake drove the Dutch fleet into Calais, with the loss of eleven men-of-war and thirty merchantmen. He also joined the final battle between Van Tromp and Generals Deane and Monk, in which Van Tromp was killed. Admiral Blake did other great services to the Commonwealth, and continued to uphold the valour of the English fleet. He died on board his ship while entering Plymouth Sound on his return from Cadiz, at the age of fifty-nine.

Dandolo was elected Doge of Venice at eighty-four. When ninety-four and blind he stormed Constantinople, and was elected to the throne of the Eastern Empire, which he declined, and died Doge at ninety-seven. Washington was in his ripe middle age before he entered upon the great

career of his life. Dumourier was over fifty before he found a stage for his military abilities, and then he had all Europe for his spectators.

Old Radetzky, the Austrian general, did not achieve his great victory at Novara until he had reached the age of eighty-three. He had seen much service before, but had never an opportunity of distinguishing himself. He bombarded and took Venice after three months' heroic resistance; he was then appointed governor-general of the Austrian provinces in Italy, and did not retire from his profession until he had reached his ninetieth year.

Lord Clyde, though he joined the army in 1808, and was at the battles of Vimiero and Corunna, had to wait long before he attained the position of colonel. He was nearly fifty years old when he embarked for China in the command of the 78th Regiment. He was sixty-two when he was appointed to the command of the Highland Brigade in the Crimea, and sixty-five when he did his crowning feat of delivering Lucknow and quelling the Indian Rebellion.

Von Moltke, at the ripe age of sixty-six, was scarcely known. He had long before written a history of the war between Turkey and Russia in 1828 and 1829; and in the English translation of the work, published in 1854, Von Moltke was referred to by the editor as "a captain in the Prussian army, since deceased." Yet the great strategist lived to win the battle of Sedan at seventy. Soldiers who have had no opportunity of distinguishing themselves may take courage at the thought.

Some men have failed in one thing and succeeded in others. Addison failed as a speaker and as a dramatist; his first play of *Rosamund* was hissed off the stage; but his papers in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* are the most charming essays in the world. Otway failed as an actor, but his drama

of *Venice Preserved* was an immense success. Sothern, the well-known actor, once said in public that the early part of his dramatic life was chiefly occupied in getting dismissed for incapacity.

Many literary men of eminence might be mentioned who have emerged from obscurity into fame late in life. Sterne, unnoticed before, published his first work, *Tristram Shandy*, at forty-seven, and his *Sentimental Journey* at fifty-five. De Foe published the first part of his most popular work, *Robinson Crusoe*, when he was fifty-eight. Richardson did not begin to produce the novels upon which his fame chiefly rests until he was fifty: he did not finish *Clarissa Harlowe* until he was near sixty. It is true that, when a boy, he was distinguished for his flow of invention in telling stories to his schoolfellows, "all out of his own head." At the same time he was a favourite with the girls in his neighbourhood, who got Richardson to write love-letters to their sweethearts.

Fielding wrote *Tom Jones*, and Rousseau *La Nouvelle Héloise*, at about the same age that Richardson wrote *Pamela*. Dr. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, perhaps his best work, was written three years before his death, in his seventy-fifth year. Ben Jonson died at sixty-three, and on his deathbed he wrote his exquisite pastoral fragment *The Sad Shepherd*. And Longfellow wrote his ingenious and delicate poem *De Senectute*, which he delivered at Bowdoin College on his seventieth birthday. The Queen of Roumania has said, "La bonté des enfants est angélique, mais la bonté des vieillards est divine!"

John Speed, the historian, published his first book in his sixty-sixth year, having up to that time maintained himself by plying the trade of a tailor. The elder Scaliger, who was in early life a page, and then a soldier, did not apply him-

self to learning until late in life; and the first of his numerous works did not appear until he had reached his forty-seventh year. Lamarck, the celebrated botanist and zoologist, entered the French army in his seventeenth year. He served as a soldier for fifteen years, and was engaged in many battles, distinguishing himself for his bravery. At length he was grievously wounded and compelled to retire from military service. He was about forty when he published his first work on botany—having been employed under Jussieu at the Jardin des Plantes. He began to give lectures at fifty, and continued them for twenty-five years. Although he became blind and infirm, he continued as studious and laborious as ever. His last work, *Mémoires sur les Coquilles*, was prepared with the assistance of his daughter, and he died at the advanced age of eighty-six.

Scaliger and Lamarck were both soldiers in early life. It is remarkable how large a number of eminent men have obtained their habits of discipline, obedience, and labour from their early training in military service. The career of arms, instead of being a hindrance, may actually be a help in future life. Drill, discipline, obedience, and courage are useful in every vocation, and possess a powerful influence upon the formation of character. At all events, they develop the power of disciplined concentration which is essential to the display of true genius. Look, for instance, at the following brief list of distinguished soldiers: In Greece—Socrates, Æschylus, Sophocles, Xenophon; in Italy—Julius Cæsar, Horace, Dante, and others; in Spain and Portugal—Cervantes, Calderon, Camoens, Lope de Vega, Ignatius Loyola; in France—Descartes, Maupertuis, De la Rochefoucauld, Lacepede, Lamarck, Paul Louis Courier; in England—Chaucer, Ben Jonson, Philip Sydney, Algernon Sydney, George Buchanan, Davenant, Farquhar, Lovelace,

Withers, Otway, Bunyan, Steele, Sotheby, Cobbett, Murchison. It was the intention of the celebrated John Hunter to enlist as a soldier, when his brother William invited him to London to assist him with his anatomical dissections. He made so much progress that, at the age of twenty-seven, he was admitted to a partnership in the lectures. It was not, however, until his forty-fourth year that he published his first work—the introduction to a *Treatise on the Teeth*. After that period, his contributions to medicine, surgery, and physiology, were numerous, original, and of great value. John Hunter's museum is, after all, his best monument.

Among late authors may be mentioned De Bonald, who, according to Saint Beuve, was forty before he thought of writing, or dreamt of becoming an author. William Hutton of Birmingham did not become an author until he was fifty-six, after which he wrote fourteen works, the last of them in his eighty-fifth year. The Rev. W. Kirby wrote his *Bridgewater Treatise on the Habits and Instincts of Animals* in his seventieth year. A few years later, he published his *Fauna Borealis Americana*, and died at ninety—showing the peaceful tendency of naturalistic pursuits.

There are many instances of marvellously gifted old men, who seem to have been proof against the decay of age, and even of the ravages of disease. Disraeli has said that old age has been a thing unknown to many men of genius. They have preserved their sensorial and intellectual faculties to the last days of their life. Plato died, pen in hand, at the age of eighty-one. Cato learnt Greek after his sixtieth year—some say at eighty—in order to read the Greek dramas in the original.[1] Cicero composed his beautiful *Treatise on*

[1] Montaigne, who disapproved of works in old age, says of this: "That which they report of Cato amongst other things, that in his extreme old age he put himself upon learning the Greek tongue with so

Old Age at sixty-three, the year before his violent death. Galileo finished his *Dialogues on Motion* at seventy-two. He was engaged, with his pupil, Toricelli, in continuing the same work when he died in his seventy-eighth year. The minds of these men grew, and widened, and deepened with time. "It is a poor wine," said Lord Jeffrey, "that grows sour with age."

Among the other old men who have learnt new languages, for improvement or for amusement, were Dr. Johnson and James Watt. They wished to test whether their mental faculties had become impaired with age. Johnson learnt Low Dutch at seventy-one, and Watt learnt German at seventy-five. Both mastered those languages, and found that their faculties were unimpaired. Thomas Scott began the study of Hebrew at fifty-six; but Goethe was sixty-four when he began the study of Oriental literature. He died at eighty-three with all his powers of thought and imagination complete.[1]

Late in life, Lord Camden, after he had been Lord High-Chancellor, learnt Spanish, with the object of read-

greedy an appetite as if to quench a long thirst, does not seem to make much for his honour; it being properly what we call being twice a child." [*Essays*, Book ii. c. 28: "All things have their Season."] Elsewhere he says: "Sometimes the Body first submits to age, sometimes the Soul; and I have seen enow who have got a weakness in their Brains before either in their Hams or Stomach" [Book i. c. 57: "Of Age."] And again: "Maturity has its Defects as well as Verdure, and worse; and Old Age is as unfit for this kind of business (authorship) as any other; who commits his Decrepitude to the Press, plays the Fool, if he think to squeeze anything out thence that does not relish of Dotage and Stupidity. Our wits grow costive and thick on growing old" [Book iii. c. 12: "Of Physiognomy."]

[1] Dr. Cumberland, the learned Bishop of Peterborough, when eighty-three years old, was presented by Dr. Wilkins with a copy of his Coptic Testament. The bishop, like another Cato, at once began the study of the language, which he speedily mastered.

ing the romances in that language, having exhausted those in English, French, and Italian. Alexander von Humboldt wrote the last page of his *Cosmos* in his ninetieth year, and died the month after its completion. The veteran Leopold von Ranke continued his labours at the rate of eight hours a day even in his ninety-first year; and his last writings were almost as good as his first.

Some writer has said, that after the age of forty the brain receives no new impressions; but students far advanced in life may be comforted by the fact that Dr. Priestley knew nothing of chemistry until he had reached that age. Writing to Sir Humphrey Davy, when in his sixty-eighth year, Dr. Priestley said: "As old an experimenter as I am, I was near forty before I made any experiments on the subject of air, and then without, in a manner, any previous knowledge of chemistry." He discovered oxygen gas in his forty-first year, and nitrous gas, carbonic-oxide gas, fluoric-acid gas, muriatic, and other gases (now called by different names) in subsequent years. Dr. Thomson has said of him: "No one ever entered upon the study of chemistry with more disadvantages than Dr. Priestley, and yet how few have occupied a more distinguished station in it, or contributed a greater number of new and important facts."

The great astronomers have mostly lived to be old men, in full possession of their faculties. They have found work to be the divine consoler of age. They are strong to endure, as well as strong to hope. We have already mentioned Galileo, who dictated his last work when blind and physically helpless. Hevelius watched the heavenly bodies with ardour until seventy-six; and Copernicus until seventy. Newton wrote a new preface to his *Principia* at eighty-three. Flamsteed, Halley, Bradley, Maskelyne, and Herschell, all lived to be old men. And Mrs. Somerville, author

of *The Mechanism of the Heavens*, gave to the world her last new work, *Molecular and Microscopic Science*, at the ripe age of eighty-nine. When it was objected to Delambre that the successive parts of his *History of Astronomy* contained numerous corrections, amounting to dissertations on the matter of those which had preceded them, the veteran replied, "I have a very short answer: I began this undertaking at the age of sixty-three; I am now seventy-two, and if I had waited to begin printing until I had nothing to add or to strike out, the work would have been lost."

Great statesmen and judges have been for the most part long-lived. The truth is, that nothing preserves life so much as a strong interest in life. Dull men disappear, but active men live on. Exercise of all the faculties is necessary for health; and this is as true of the old man as of the young. Idleness leads to the degeneracy of the muscles, heart, and brain; and the rapid waste of the intellectual powers. Dr. Lordat, the celebrated physiologist of Montpelier, affirmed that it is the vital, not the intellectual principle that is seen to wane as old age throws its autumnal tinge over the green foliage of life. "It is not true," he said, "that the intellect becomes weaker after the vital force has passed its culminating point. The understanding acquires more strength during the first half of the period which is designated as old age. It is therefore impossible to assign any period of existence at which the reasoning powers suffer deterioration."

Lords Eldon, Brougham, Lyndhurst, and Palmerston, were eminent in their age as in their youth. Eldon died at the age of eighty-six, and remained in the full enjoyment of his wonderful intellect until shortly before his death. Brougham seemed long to defy time and death, though at length, in his ninetieth year, he succumbed to the great

leveller. Lyndhurst, on the night that he entered his ninetieth year, addressed the House of Lords in a speech of incomparable clearness, lucidity, and ability—showing that his powerful intellect was setting without a cloud. Yet he lived for two years longer, clear and simple-minded to the last. Palmerston was one of the youngest men in the House of Commons. He was an Old Boy to the last. He continued the gay, buoyant, ever-youthful hero of debate, and was a thorough type of the working statesman. He was "always in a triumph or a fight"; and work seemed to stimulate, intensify, and prolong his vital energies. He was Prime Minister for a greater number of years than any man in this century excepting Lord Liverpool, and retained his marvellous popularity to the last. Men believed in his consistency, truthfulness, honesty, and patriotism: he died Prime Minister in his eighty-first year.

Law administrators have almost been as famous for their capacity of living as law-makers. Sir Edward Coke fell from his horse at the age of eighty. His head lighted upon "sharp stubbes," and the horse fell upon his body. Yet he lived for more than a year. The last few days of his life were spent in preparing his numerous legal works for publication. Sir Matthew Hale resigned the chief-justiceship of the King's Bench at sixty-seven. Mansfield died at eighty-nine, his mind remaining bright and vigorous to the last. Lords Stowell, Hardwicke, Camden, and Campbell, lived to be very old men. Indeed, some of the judges have continued in the performance of their duties so long as to occasion much dissatisfaction amongst the rising members of the Bar. Lefroy was Lord Chief-Justice of the Irish Bench until his ninetieth year. His long continuance in office was made the subject of discussion in the Irish press,

as well as in the House of Lords. And yet, as he always said, his judgment was as good, and his experience even greater than ever. Chief-Baron Pollock was almost driven from his position by the clamour raised in the English press. He retired at eighty-three, and amused himself with photography, becoming President of the Photographic Society. He never ceased to take the greatest interest in mathematics. His death occurred four years after his retirement, in his eighty-seventh year. We must therefore be a little cautious, as Lord Chelmsford said in the House of Lords, "in measuring the mental capacity of old age: it is never too late to begin, and it would appear that it is never too late to end."

Work, not idleness, leads to enjoyment. Idleness consumes men more than rust does iron. It leads to degeneracy and waste of vital power. The idle man slides out of existence from sheer want of anything to cling to. What a waste of life is his who has no favourite books, no store of thoughts, no happy recollections of what he has done, experienced, or read. The tallow-chandler who went back to his tub "on melting days" is better than the retired rich man with "nothing to do." The evening hours of life may be the most beautiful, as the fairest leaves of the flowers are those which the bud the last discloses.

We have spoken of the case of James Watt. During the early part of his life, while occupied with his inventions, he was, like Carlyle, afflicted with dyspepsia, was subject to racking headaches, and was often ready to be rid of life altogether. But as his years advanced his troubles left him, and in course of time he enjoyed the pleasures of a fine old age. He read the books that he loved the best, varied his enjoyments with inventing, planting, or excursions to London and Wales. He no longer "cursed his inventions," but

lived over again his old schemes, and made new ones. "Without a hobby-horse," he said, "what is life?" When at Edinburgh, in his eighty-second year, he met Sir Walter Scott, Lord Jeffrey, with many others; and "the alert, kind, benevolent old man," as he is described by Sir Walter, delighted them with his cheerfulness not less than he astonished them by the extent and profundity of his information. "It seemed," said Jeffrey, "as if every subject that was casually started had been that which he was specially occupied in studying." He went on inventing and perfecting his inventions to the end, presenting to his friends the first copies of the busts made by his copying-machine, as "the productions of a young artist just entering his eighty-third year." In the following year, James Watt quietly slipped away, amidst the tears of the mourning friends who assembled round his deathbed. "I look upon him," said the poet Wordsworth, "considering both the magnitude and universality of his genius, as perhaps the most extraordinary man that this country ever produced; he never sought display, but was content to work in that quietness and humility, both of spirit and of outward circumstances, in which alone all that is truly great and good was ever done."

After all, age is but the shadow of death; yet, during life, duty can find an infinite outcome. The true preparation for old age is a pure life and faithfulness to duty. These are the solid results of a lifetime, no matter how long or how short it be. The winter of life cannot be one of discontent, but of hope, and joy, and everlasting peace.

CHAPTER V

LINEAGE OF TALENT AND GENIUS

Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us.—*Ecclesiasticus.*

Happy is the man who can trace his lineage, ancestor by ancestor, and cover hoary time with a green mantle of youth.—JEAN PAUL RICHTER.

The sentiment of ancestry is not only inherent in human nature, and especially visible in the higher races of the world, but contributes in no small degree to the stability of kingdoms in the worst periods, as, assuredly, it is always found to be peculiarly vivid in the best.—JAMES HANNAY.

Noble sons do not always spring from noble fathers, nor evil from evil; but there is no trusting to anything mortal.—SOPHOCLES.

Nobles and heralds, by your leave,
Here lies what once was Matthew Prior;
The son of Adam and of Eve,
Can Bourbon or Nassau go higher?
PRIOR'S *Epitaph on himself.*

AS races of men produce their like, so do individual men and women. Races continue to preserve their bodily form and constitution, their features, their general character, from one generation to another; and so do individuals. The natives of China, Japan, India, and the East, are the same now as they were thousands of years ago. The Bedouin Arabs of the Abrahamic days are the Bedouin Arabs of the nineteenth century. So, too, in Europe, notwithstanding the intermingling of races. The picture of the Germans, as drawn by Tacitus, might stand for the picture of the Germans now; with this difference,

that the modern Germans wear cloth instead of skins, and are armed with needle guns instead of bows and spears. Julius Cæsar, in his *Commentaries*, describes the Gauls as we still find them; as Giraldus Cambrensis, in his works, has described the Irishmen and Welshmen.

In the same way, families propagate their like. Sons and daughters resemble their fathers and mothers, and inherit their constitution, their features, their temperaments, and their character. Through intermarriages they are no doubt liable to change. The male progeny usually partake more largely of the character of the father, and the female children of that of the mother. Certain peculiarities disappear, while others come into prominence; yet though the qualities of the progenitors may become dispersed, society collectively retains them, and the character of the race remains indelible.

Even special features and characteristics are preserved in families through many generations. Sometimes they disappear in a son or a daughter, to reappear in a grandson or great grand-daughter. Through a *mésalliance* of about one hundred and forty years ago, Indian blood became infused in a certain noble family; and from time to time the dark visage reappears, though the rest of the family remains fair. Any one who passes along the picture-gallery of an old family mansion will observe the same cast of features reproduced again and again, though the subjects of them lived hundreds of years apart.

Sometimes the likeness to an ancestor does not appear until death approaches, and sometimes not until after death. Sir Thomas Browne, in his letter to a friend, describes a dying man, who "maintained not his proper countenance, but looked like his uncle, the lines of whose face lay deep and invisible in his healthful visage before."

The poet-laureate has recognised the same fact in his *In Memoriam:*

> "As sometimes in a dead man's face,
> To those that watch it more and more,
> A likeness hardly seen before
> Comes out to some one of his race."[1]

In a recent temporary exhibition of National Portraits, the hereditariness of family features appeared very remarkable in the configuration of the head, the form of the nose, the colour and expression of the eye, the shade of the hair, the shape of the hands, and the carriage of the person.[2] Dr. Darwin mentions several illustrative cases which are as curious of their kind as his illustrations of the transmitted habits of the tumbler pigeon.[3] There are special features which belong to different families. There are also moral

[1] Southey says: "Did you ever remark how remarkably old age brings out family likenesses,—which, having been kept, as it were, in abeyance while the passions and the business of the world engrossed the parties, come forth again in age (as in infancy), the features setting into their primary character—before dissolution? I have seen some affecting instances of this,—a brother and sister,—than whom no two persons in middle life could have been more unlike in countenance and character, becoming like as twins at last. I now see my father's lineaments in the looking-glass, where they never used to appear."

[2] Sir Walter Scott applied the transmission of a family feature in his novel of *Redgauntlet*, where the mark of an inverted horse-shoe in the midst of the brows was transmitted from father to son.

[3] Dr. Darwin, in his *Origin of Species*, says: "No doubt it is a very surprising fact that characters should reappear after having been lost for many, perhaps for hundreds of generations. . . . When a character that has been lost in a breed, reappears after a great number of generations, the most probable hypothesis is, not that the offspring suddenly takes after an ancestor some hundred generations distant, but that in each successive generation there has been a tendency to reproduce the character in question, which at last, under unknown favourable conditions, gains an ascendency."

features; some families are talkative and histrionic, while others are silent and shy.

The Carlisle Howards exhibit the family full under-lip; the Shaftesburys, the long narrow face; the Dalrymples of Stair, the sharp uptilted nose, which has run through the family for many generations. William Pitt got his nose from his mother, who was a woman of strong individual character. The Granville face is from the Duke of Bridgewater's mother. A peculiar thickness of the lip has been hereditary in the house of Hapsburg for centuries; as a fulness of the lower and lateral parts of the face has characterised our own Royal Family from George I. to Queen Victoria. The present Prince of Wales exactly resembles his great grandfather, George III., when about the same age.

But the characteristic features of the Royal Family go much further back than George I. They reach back to the Stuarts, through Elizabeth, daughter of James I. The full cheek and under-jaw of James I. disappeared in his son Charles I., but reappeared in his grandsons, Charles II. and James II., and afterwards in the Pretender and his son, Charles Edward Stuart, between whose portrait and that of Queen Victoria a striking likeness is observable. The same form of countenance has been preserved in the ducal families of Grafton and St. Alban's, descended from Charles II. The likeness between the late Lord Frederick Beauclerk (drowned at Scarborough) and that monarch, is said to have been almost startling.[1]

[1] A. Seymour, in *Notes and Queries*, 9th January 1869, said: "There is another feature in our Royal Family which is rather remarkable, and that is the recollection of faces which they preserve from year to year, as well as their recognition of personal attachment. This has distinguished them for many generations." Sir Arthur Helps specially referred to this fact in the first Queen's *Journal*, which he edited.

The Bourbons retained through many ages their physical and moral qualities. They have been throughout perverse, intractable, and unteachable. From Louis XIV. to Charles X. they have distinguished themselves by their narrowness, blindness, and incapacity to govern justly. Napoleon Buonaparte spoke of them as "the hereditary asses." They were banished from nearly all the thrones they occupied—from France, from Spain, from Naples. The Austrian branch survives, the monarch being now constitutional in his tendencies. The thickness of the under-lip, which has characterised this branch for several hundred years, is said to have been brought into the family by the Polish princess, Jagellon, and has never been lost.[1]

The same peculiarities of personal features and character have, to a great extent, been hereditary in the Prussian Monarchy. Mr. Rossetti observed, in the collection of portraits of the house of Brandenburg, the striking likeness which prevailed amongst its members for centuries. He particularises those of the Elector Frederick I. (1420), Frederick II. (1440), John Cicero (1486), and Joachim I. (1499), as showing a striking resemblance to the physiognomy of the late kings, Frederick William IV. and William I., as well as to that of the present Emperor of Germany.[2]

Hereditary character is transmitted in the noble families of the same country. Take for instance the case of Bismarck. The present count belongs to a race which has in

[1] Burton, in his *Anatomy of Melancholy*, written in the early part of the seventeenth century, says: "The Austrian lip and the Indians flat noses are propagated."

[2] *Notes and Queries*, 28th November 1868, p. 514. The *Edinburgh Review* for October 1866, thus refers to the hereditary moral character of the princes of the Hohenzollern family: "The royal race of Prussia, by far the most gifted in point of abilities of old European sovereign

all times been known for its virility, its tenacity, and even its obstinacy. The first distinguished member of the family defied his bishop in the year 1338 with such obstinacy—though it was merely in a matter of local politics—that he was excommunicated, and died unrepentant, without receiving the last sacrament.[1]

Features are also reproduced. Lodge's portraits show a strong family likeness running through six generations of the ducal family of Manchester. Bruce, the African traveller, proud of his descent from the Norman Robert Bruce, who so gallantly won and held the throne of Scotland, was, like his heroic ancestor, of gigantic size and strength, being six feet four in stature. The Clackmannanshire Bruces, who are in the direct descent, also exhibit, like him, that strongly-marked form of the cheek-bone and jaws which appears on the coins of Robert the Bruce, and which was confirmed by the actual bones of the monarch, when his body was disinterred at Dunfermline some fifty years ago. The Wallaces of Craigie are also said strongly to resemble the portrait of Sir William Wallace, their great ancestor.

Moral and intellectual qualities are transmissible, though circumstances may not occur to bring them into development in successive generations. But there are many old families in which we observe the old type of character reappearing from time to time. We have but to name the Percies, the Douglasses, the Stanleys, the Grahams, the Nevilles, the Howards, whose doughty deeds run through

families, have always displayed a full share both of the power and weaknesses of the North German character. Generation after generation, the house of Hohenzollern has produced its men of strong and practical intellect, and also of dreamers,—men of intellectual capacity likewise, but in whom the tendency, so eminently national, towards the 'schwärmerisch,' enthusiastic, and nebulous, largely predominated."

[1] Professor Riedel, "Märkische Forskhemgen."

English and Scottish history. The energetic quality of the Normans, like the Norsemen from whom they sprung, illumines all European history, elevating them to dukedoms and thrones in Normandy, England, Scotland, Sicily, and Jerusalem, and penetrating even to Constantinople itself.

Nor have the scions of the same race been undistinguished in legislation, in patriotism, in science, or in letters. The names of Sydney and Russell, of Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke, of Boyle and Cavendish, of Fox and Pitt, of Lovelace, Herbert, Hyde, and Byron, will always be remembered. Henry Beyle, speaking of Byron, whom he met in Italy, says in one of his letters: "The Italians were all struck with astonishment at this great poet thinking more of himself as a descendant of the Norman Byrons than as the author of *Parisina* and *Lara*."[1]

Scott was equally proud of his ancient lineage, and valued his descent from the Scotts of Harden, and his kinship with the "bold Buccleuch," more than his fame as a poet and novelist. "Blood," says Mr. Hannay, "shows itself a great deal more than people who know nothing of the subject would probably admit. . . . Philosophers like Bacon, Hume, and Berkeley; poets like Spenser, Cowper, Shelley, Scott; novelists like Fielding and Smollett; historians like Gibbon; seamen like Collingwood, Howe, and Jervis; Vanes, St. Johns, Raleighs, Herberts, and many more men of the ancient gentry, amply vindicate the pretensions of old families to the honour of producing the best men that England has ever seen."[2] Even Jeremy Bentham, the democratic philosopher, at one time contemplated the purchase of the property of the Counts of Bentheim in Hanover, from whom he was descended. Fielding, too,

[1] De Stendhal (Henry Beyle), *Correspondance Inédite*. Paris, 1857.
[2] Hannay, *Essays from the Quarterly*. London, 1861.

was of the younger branch of the Earls of Denbigh, who derived their origin from the Counts of Hapsburg.

When a local historian of Somersetshire called upon Sydney Smith, while living at Combe Florey, to ask him for his coat-of-arms, the answer of the learned rector was: "The Smiths never had any arms, but have invariably sealed their letters with their thumbs!" The motto the witty divine afterwards adopted for his carriage was, "*Faber meæ fortunæ.*" Yet even Sydney Smith was proud of his lineage; for his grandfather was a man of singular natural gifts, and his mother was the daughter of a French Huguenot, from whom he is said to have inherited all the finer qualities of his mind, as well as much of his constitutional gaiety of temperament. Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Winchester, was one of the many instances of the transmission of eminence from father to son. Like the first Pitt, the first Fox, the first Grenville, the first Grey, the first Canning, the celebrated first Wilberforce left a son who sustained for a second generation the distinction of his name.

On the other hand, many of the greatest men have been unheralded by any reputation whatever on the part of their ancestors. When some of the old noblesse of France were boasting of their line of ancestry, Marshal Junot exclaimed, "*Ah! ma foi!* I have nothing of that sort; I am *my own ancestor.*" It has been the same with many great men; they have been their own ancestors. Napoleon said of his generals, that he raised them out of mud. Napoleon himself was the son of a Corsican advocate, of ancient lineage, but otherwise undistinguished. Warriors, statesmen, poets, engineers, and others, have been their own ancestors. The light of genius flashes out suddenly, in the midst of a line of generations of the unknown. A man is

born whose name rings through the world, and lives through all time; but he is alone amongst his race, and when he dies his family sinks again into obscurity.

Talent is transmissible, but genius very rarely. Talent is a common family trait; while genius belongs to the individual only.[1] We see a family, low in intellect, throw out some great man of genius. Talent takes the mark of its generation, but genius stamps time with its impression. Shakespeare stood alone in his race. There was nothing before him in his generation, and nothing after. Only his poems and dramas live; his heraldry is extinct. So with Newton, the freeholder's son of Woolsthorpe; there was no Newton before him, and no Newton after. The greatest of the poets stood alone in their generation—Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Burns,[2] Byron, Shelley, Keats, and many more.

Great men are indeed of no rank or class, but are of all ranks and classes. They may have been born in hovels and cottages, as often as in mansions and palaces; and though many great men have come of noble lineage, many more men have been of humble rank and lowly origin.

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[1] Buffon said that genius was patience, but he said also that it required the electric spirit to rouse it into power. The following are his words: "L'invention depend de la patience: il faut voir, regarder long temps son sujet; alors il se déroule et se développe peu à peu; vous sentez *un petit coup d'électricité* qui vous frappe à la tête et en même temps vous saisit le cœur: *voilà le moment du génie.*"

[2] "Read Burns to-day. What would he have been, if a patrician? We should have had more polish—less force—just as much verse, but no immortality—a divorce and a duel or two, the which had he survived, as his potations must have been less spirituous, he might have lived as long as Sheridan, and outlived as much as poor Brinsley. What a wreck is that man! and all from bad pilotage."—*Life of Byron*, 8vo. edition, p. 200.

Take the following list of illustrious names in proof that talent and genius are of no exclusive rank or class :—

Nobles and Squires.	Middle Class.	Working Class.
Tycho Brahe.	Newton.	Columbus.
Galileo.	Cuvier.	Copernicus.
Descartes.	Wollaston.	Luther.
Bacon.	Young.	Dollond.
Boyle.	Kepler.	Franklin.
Cavendish.	Dalton.	Faraday.
Dante.	Herschell.	Laplace.
Alfieri.	Shakespeare.	Ben Jonson.
Cowper.	Milton.	Bunyan.
Scott.	Petrarch.	Burns.
Byron.	Dryden.	Beranger.
Shelley.	Schiller.	Jasmin.
Burleigh.	Goethe.	Brindley.
Sully.	Molière.	Stephenson.
Bolingbroke.	Wordsworth.	Arkwright.
Mirabeau.	Keats.	Telford.
Montaigne.	De Foe.	Livingstone.
Smollett.	Adam Smith.	Inigo Jones.
Fielding.	James Watt.	Canova.
Hume.	John Hunter.	Captain Cook.
Bulwer Lytton.	Carlyle.	George Fox.
Condé.	Jeremy Taylor.	Turner.
Count Tilly.	Drake.	Sir John Hawkswood.
Wallenstein.	Cromwell.	Sir Cloudesley Shovel.
Marshal Saxe.	Washington.	Ney.
Marlborough.	Napoleon.	Hoche.
Wellington.	Nelson.	Soult.

It is difficult to draw the line that separates the middle from the aristocratic class. Some families claim that their ancestors came "in with the Conquest"; some that their ancestors were here long before the Conquest took place; and others that they are descended from the Celts and Kymry, who lived in Great Britain long before either Jutes, Saxons, Danes, Norsemen, or Normans, had settled in the country.

Cromwell, though a brewer and grazing farmer, is said to have been descended from the Cromwells, knights of Hinchinbrook, as well as from Cromwell. Earl of Essex;

and by his mother's side from the Stewarts, or royal Stuarts of Scotland.[1] Yet the original Cromwell was but a Putney blacksmith; so here we have the royal, aristocratic, and working classes united in one family.[2] John Knox too, though born in a humble condition, is said to have claimed descent from the ancient house of Ranfurly in Renfrewshire.[3] The family of Descartes considered it a blot on their escutcheon that he should have been born a gentleman and degraded into a philosopher. But only the philosopher's name has been remembered, while the rest of his aristocratic family have sunk into oblivion.

Dryden's father was incumbent of Oldwinkle, All-Saints, in Northamptonshire, but he was descended from Sir Erasmus Driden, high-sheriff of that county in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Sir Walter Scott's father was grandson to a younger son of Scott of Raeburn, a branch of the ancient baronial house of Harden, and his mother was grand-daughter to Sir John Swinton of Swinton, in Berwickshire,—both distinguished families.

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[1] The Queen, in the *Journal of our Life in the Highlands*, when describing her voyage up the Firth of Forth, says: "We also saw Dundas Castle, belonging to Dundas of Dundas, and further on, beyond Hopetoun, Blackness Castle, famous in history. On the opposite side you see a square tower close to the water, called Rosyth, where Oliver Cromwell's mother was said to have been born." This, however, must be a mistake, as Oliver Cromwell's mother was never in Scotland. Her name was Elizabeth Steward; she was daughter of William Steward, Esquire, in Ely, hereditary farmer of the Cathedral tithes and Church lands round that city. The Stewards, who had long been settled in England, are not known to have possessed any property in Scotland. They were said to be descended from the Stuarts of Rosyth, a branch of the royal family of Scotland. This, however, is denied by Professor Gairdner and Mr. Walter Rye. See Rye's *History of Norfolk*, pp. 87-91.

[2] Carlyle's *Cromwell*.

[3] Robert Chambers's *Lives of Illustrious and Distinguished Scotsmen*.

Cowper's father was rector of Great Berkhamstead, but his grandfather was one of the judges of the Common Pleas, and brother to the celebrated Lord Chancellor Cowper; while his mother was Anne Donne, who traced her descent, by four distinct lines, from Henry III., King of England. In a letter to Mrs. Bodham, his cousin by his mother's side, Cowper says: "There is in me, I believe, more of the Donne than the Cowper; and although I love all of both names, and have a thousand reasons to love those of my own name, yet I feel the bond of nature draw me vehemently to your side. I was thought, in the days of my childhood, much to resemble my mother; and in my natural temper, of which at the age of fifty-eight I must be supposed to be a competent judge, can trace both her and my late uncle your father." Every one will remember Cowper's tender lines, written after regarding his mother's portrait, beginning—

> "Oh that those lips had language! Life has passed
> With me but roughly since I saw thee last."

Though Colbert was the son of a cloth and wine merchant ("négociant en draps et en vin"), he traced his descent from an old Scotch family, the Cuthberts of Castle Hill; while Maximilian de Bethune, Duke of Sully, traced his descent from the Beatons or Bethunes in the county of Fife.

The greatest warriors have, for the most part, sprung from the governing class,—kings, earls, and members of the aristocratic order,—such as Alfred and Charlemagne, Edward III. of England and Charles V. of Spain, Henry IV. of France, Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. of Sweden, Frederick the Great of Prussia, and Peter the Great of Russia. Among the aristocratic class, we also find Turenne, Condé, Wallenstein, Marlborough, Marshal Saxe, Wellington, and the

Napiers. This system continued until the American and French Revolutions, when merit and valour alone were considered, and generals were, almost for the first time in history, raised from the ranks.

Of poets, the middle ranks have produced the greatest—Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, Schiller, and Wordsworth; while in general literature, the honours are pretty equally divided between men of the aristocratic and middle class. But in practical science, invention, and mechanics, as might be expected, the greatest names are found in the middle and working classes. "The majority of the distinguished chemists of Great Britain," says Dr. G. Wilson, "have sprung from the middle or lower ranks."[1]

It was not until the reign of Elizabeth that the middle class began to exist as a power in the State. Until then, learning and statesmanship had been almost entirely confined to the clergy and aristocracy. The extension of commerce and increase of wealth, the invention of printing and the reformation of religion, tended amongst other things to bring the middle classes into existence. From that time we find not only great statesmen, such as Burleigh, Bacon, Walsingham, and Mildmay; but great seamen, such as Hawkins, Raleigh, Drake, and Blake; and great poets, such as Spenser, Shakespeare, Jonson, Milton, and a host of others, mostly sprung from the middle class.

Of the great statesmen who then began to appear, Macaulay says: "They were not members of the aristocracy. They inherited no titles, no large domains, no armies of retainers, no fortified castles. Yet they were not low men, such as those whom princes, jealous of the power of the nobility, have sometimes raised from forges and cobblers' stalls to the highest situations. They were all gentlemen by

[1] *Life of Cavendish.*

birth ; they had all received a liberal education ; and it is a remarkable fact that they were all members of the same university. Cambridge had the honour of educating those celebrated Protestant bishops whom Oxford had the honour of burning ; and at Cambridge were formed the minds of all those statesmen to whom chiefly is to be attributed the secure establishment of the reformed religion in the north of Europe."[1]

Many of the most distinguished statesmen of the same rank—the class of country gentlemen—have been celebrated during the last two centuries—such as Fox, Pitt, and others ; though, in recent times, some of the most illustrious have come from the ranks of commerce. After the death of Richard Cobden, Mr. Disraeli eulogised him as the only man of the pure middle class who had in modern times achieved distinction as a statesman, yet it must be remembered that Burke, Canning, Peel, Macaulay, Wilberforce, and Gladstone came from precisely the same class ; and these are statesmen whose names will not readily be forgotten.

But many of the greatest men have been of altogether ignoble lineage, and scarcely able to trace their origins back to their grandfathers. With the exception of Beaumont and Fletcher, the Elizabethan dramatists were all sons of the people. Though poor they were educated, yet their poverty contrasted strongly with their attainments. Ben Jonson was the son of a bricklayer, and a bricklayer himself. Marlowe was the son of a shoemaker, and Shakespeare of a butcher and woolstapler ; while Massinger was the son of a nobleman's servant. They lived as they best could ; wrote for bread, and went on the stage. Most of them lived hard, and some of them died like dogs.

[1] *Macaulay's Essays* (edition 1851), p. 344.

Luther was a miner's son; Pizarro, when a boy, tended pigs; Haüy, the mineralogist, was the son of a weaver, and Hauteville of a baker. Hans Sachs was a shoemaker; Allan Ramsay a periwig-maker; Samuel Pepys—a man of a gossipy and tailorly turn of mind—was appropriately the son of a tailor; Keats was the son of a livery-stable keeper; Franklin was a printer; Burns a ploughman; Tannahill a weaver; Telford a stone-mason; Stephenson a plugman; and others were of the humblest possible origin. Voltaire, when speaking of himself and his origin, passes over his father altogether, and describes himself as the "petit-fils de son grand-père." Beranger also says the same thing of himself. He mentions his grandfather the old tailor, but his father not at all. He sang in his well-known song, "I am low-born, low-born very." Jasmin, the Gascon poet and barber, was about the first of his family who did not die in the parish workhouse.

We have seen that the tendencies of constitution and temperament in men and women are hereditary. Size, features, formation, strength and energy, short and long life, are hereditary. Darwin says that longevity runs in families. He also says that Daltonism, or colour-blindness, has been traced through five generations. The German Hofacker held that even handwriting is hereditary. Certainly disease is. The list of hereditary diseases is very large—scrofula, consumption, cancer, insanity, gout, and other afflictions. Mr. Gay says the results of his observations at the Consumption Hospital was that the father transmits the hereditary tendency to his sons, and the mother to her daughters. Gout is supposed to be the rich man's disease. It is handed down from father or mother to son and daughter; and it is sometimes accompanied, not with the richness which initiated it, but with poverty; and then it is hard to bear.

Statistics show that even pauperism runs in families. The evil and idle habits of parents are visited upon their children "even to the third and fourth generation"—a consideration which should help men to watch carefully their ways, and to set a good example, if not for their own sake, at least for the sake of those who are dear to them. "The fathers eat sour grapes, and their children's teeth are set on edge." Prison chaplains show that the convict begets the convict, and workhouse masters prove that the tramp of one generation is the son of the tramp of the generation which preceded him.[1] All this may seem like cruel fate, but it is nevertheless stern fact. Even agrarian vices descend, and these can only be eradicated by self-control, culture, and wise and just government. It is a remarkable fact, as pointed out by Dr. Ball,[2] that the vice of assassination has for centuries been confined to nearly the same districts in Ireland. The poet Spenser, whose Irish home was robbed and burnt "with a little child new-born," about three centuries ago, describes the state of the south-west of Ireland in his time, and it remains in the same condition now. It is a remarkable fact, as pointed out by Dr. Ball, that, in his *Faëry Queen*, Spenser should have selected the Glen of Aberlow as the special haunt of the evil spirits,—a place, until recently, too notorious for the ferocity of its agrarian outrages.

A much better result is to be found in the fact that technical and artistic skill descends from father to son.

[1] Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes says: "*There is something fearful* in the way in which not only characteristic qualities, but particular manifestations of them, are repeated from generation to generation. Jonathan Edwards, the younger, tells the story of a brutal wretch in Newhaven who was abusing his father, when the old man cried out, 'Don't drag me any farther, for *I* didn't drag *my* father beyond this tree.'"

[2] Speech in the House of Commons, 21st March 1870.

The son of the mechanic is more apt to work skilfully in mechanics than the son of the ploughman. His aptitude seems to come to him by nature. His educability is greater because of his descent. There are families of carvers, inlayers, engravers, and painters. There were fourteen of the Kilians of Augsburg who were distinguished as engravers, extending through four generations. There were three Vanderveldes, four Vernets, two Teniers, and two Rafaelles. The Gaertners, a family of German architects, flourished during two centuries; and the Milnes, mechanics, architects, and engineers, flourished for three hundred years. In these cases the talented father made the talented son. Hence Pascal's grand formula: "The whole succession of mankind during the long course of centuries must be considered as that of one man for ever existing and for ever learning something new."

The Eastern peoples have great faith in the virtue of race. The Scriptures contain many lines of genealogy. The first chapter of St. Matthew contains the generation of David down to the birth of Christ.[1] The Arabs continue their belief in genealogy. Abd-el-Kader gave the following illustration: "Take a thorny shrub, and pour rose-water over it for a whole year, yet it will produce nothing but thorns; but take a date tree, and leave it without water in the most barren ground, and it will still bring forth an abundance of luscious fruit."

Plutarch is always most particular in describing the descent of his heroes. The chief men claimed descent from the gods or the giants. Plato was descended from Solon, and Alexander from Hercules. "There is in every great family," said Cæsar, "the sanctity of kings who are

[1] See the article, "Genealogy," in Dr. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

the rulers of men, and the majesty of the gods who are the rulers of kings."[1] So common, indeed, is the transmission of character, as well as of organisation, that Sir Henry Holland said, that the wonder would be, not that character should be inherited, but that it should ever fail to be inherited. But it must be admitted that resemblance in character is not so traceable as in the case of feature and form, — principally because character depends so much upon circumstances, on education and culture, and the difficulties and obstructions which have to be overcome in building up the intelligent human being.

In any event, it is a great advantage to be well born; for moral as well as intellectual aptitude runs in the blood. High breeding belongs to certain families, poor as well as rich, and forms one of the most valuable portions of their inheritance. Pascal held, that to have the advantage of good birth gives the person who possesses it at twenty, a position in the recognition and respect of others, which those without the same advantage probably would not reach before the age of forty. The advantage of being well born is not so much in the position of the individual in society, as in his own elevation in moral and mental characteristics. St. Beuve, in a criticism on Lacordaire,[2] says: "It is by no means an unimportant matter, even as regards one's future convictions and beliefs, to have come from a strong and healthy race, as well as from an honest and pure race. When, on the foundation of a firm and distinctly-marked organisation, we find talent, virtue, and genius; when eloquence bursts forth in words of fire; and all the glorious gifts of manhood appear; then we may be certain that the natural power of the constitution will have the force to sustain them until the end."

[1] Sueton., *Julius Cæsar*, p. 6. [2] *Causeries de Lundi*, i. p. 210.

Some of the most extraordinary men in history—of wonderful vigour of character and power of intellect—have been born out of wedlock. Isaac D'Israeli, in his memoir of Toland, says that, "illegitimate birth creates strong and determined characters," which Dr. Fletcher accounts for on simple physiological principles.[1] Without entering into the history of mythical persons, we come to the great name of Charles Martel, surnamed The Hammer, the natural son of Pepin the Fat, who summarily checked the Saracens, then rapidly overrunning Christendom, and finally overthrew them in the great battle of Tours. This, indeed, was one of the great turning points in modern history, and but for the valour of Martel and his army the greater part of Europe might now have been Mahommedan instead of Christian. Martel's son Pepin was proclaimed King of the Franks, and his son and successor Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, was the greatest name in early European history, with the exception, perhaps, of Alexander the Great and Cæsar.

Passing over meaner names, we come to William the Conqueror, the illegitimate and only son of Robert le Diable of Normandy, who won the crown of England at Hastings, and held it with extraordinary vigour. Some of the greatest scions of the house of Stewart were illegimate: Murray, the "Good Regent," son of James V. of Scotland, by Lady Margaret Erskine; and the Duke of Berwick, son of James II. of England, by Arabella Churchill, sister of the Duke of Marlborough. Montesquieu regards the Duke of Berwick as the very impersonation of a perfect man. "I have seen," he says, "in the books of Plutarch, what great men were; in him I behold at a nearer view what they are."

[1] *Rudiments of Physiology*, Part ii. b., p. 3 (*note*). See also Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part ii. § 3, Memb. 2.

Yet Berwick was cold in manner and plain in speech. When the Queen of Spain was asked why she had not retained the great General's services, she replied, "C'est un grand diable d'Anglais sec, qui va toujours droit devant lui,"—perhaps the greatest compliment which could be paid to an Englishman; who says little, but does his duty.

Erasmus, the greatest scholar of his age, was born out of wedlock; his life, begun in misfortune, was one continuous struggle for light, learning, and freedom. Leonardo da Vinci, too, the universal genius, great alike as painter, architect, engineer, and philosopher, was the natural son of a Florentine noble, whose name has long been forgotten, while his son's name will live through all time. The origin of Boccaccio, author of the *Decameron*, and of Jerome Cardan, the physician and philosopher, was no higher. Marshal Saxe was sprung from royal loins, being the illegitimate son of Augustus II., King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, and the Countess Koningsmark, a Swedish lady of high rank, whose vices were inherited by her son. It is not a little remarkable that the late Madame Dudevant, known as "George Sand," gloried in her descent from the great marshal. The poet Prior was supposed to be the son of Lord Dorset,[1] as the poet Savage was the offspring of the connection between Lord Rivers and the Countess of Macclesfield; of whom the one abandoned him, and the other disowned him.

Jean le Rond d'Alembert was another illustrious illegitimate. He was picked up when an infant, one chill November morning, on the steps of St. Jean le Rond at Paris, where he had been exposed, to live or perish. The commissary of police, to whom the almost dying infant was

[1] See his epitaph on himself among the mottoes at the head of this chapter.

carried, committed him to the charge of a poor glazier's wife, by whom Jean le Rond was brought up. The father, M. Destouches, commissary of artillery, afterwards made his appearance, and claimed the child; and it turned out that the mother was no less a person than Mademoiselle de Tencin, sister of Cardinal Tencin, Archbishop of Lyons. She was a woman afterwards well known in Paris, of great talents and accomplishments. The father provided the means for the boy's education; he was trained at the best schools, and soon displayed that genius for which he eventually became so distinguished. When he had become a famous man, his mother Mademoiselle de Tencin, discovered to him the secret of his birth, and desired that he should come and live with her. "What do you say, madame?" he exclaimed: "Ah! you are only my hard-hearted mother [*marâtre*]. It is the glazier's wife who is my real mother!" M. D'Alembert accordingly returned to the humble dwelling of the poor woman who had so tenderly brought him up, and was satisfied to share her home for a period of more than forty years. His kind foster-mother, however, could scarcely conceal her annoyance at his mathematical studies while he was at college. When D'Alembert told her what he had written, she said: "Ah! you will never be anything better than a philosopher! And what is a philosopher? A fool, who torments himself during life, that people may speak of him after he is dead!" Perhaps her highest notion of a prosperous life was that of a glazier, with plenty to eat and drink. Lord Brougham published an admirable memoir of D'Alembert in his *Philosophers of the Time of George III.*, in which he ranks him in the first line of mathematicians, and places him "the first among the philosophers and geometricians who succeeded Sir Isaac Newton."

Although great men sometimes spring forth suddenly, unheralded, and unexpected, from a line of unknown ancestors, others, better born, continue to exhibit the capacity, talent, and character which they have inherited. Emile Deschanel holds that you may define a man and decipher him when you know what his surroundings have been in youth, and how he has been brought up.[1] With this, of course, parentage has very much to do. As regards individual instances, it has been matter of question whether the child is more indebted to the mother or to the father for his moral and intellectual qualities. It has been argued that the child owes most to the mother, and there is much to be said in favour of this view. "Men will always be," said Rousseau, "what women make them; if, therefore, you would have men great and virtuous, impress upon the minds of women what greatness and virtue are."

Napoleon Buonaparte was of opinion that "the future good or bad conduct of a child depends entirely on the mother." Once, in the course of a conversation with Madame Campan on the subject of public education, he remarked: "The old systems of instruction seem to be worthless; what, do you think, is yet wanting for the better instruction of the people?"—"Mothers!" immediately replied Madame Campan. Her reply struck the Emperor. "Yes!" he said, "here you have a system in a word—mothers trained to properly instruct their children." Napoleon himself was accustomed to attribute the training of his character to his mother. She was a woman distinguished for her strength of purpose and vigorous understanding. One of Napoleon's biographers says: "Nobody had any command over him except his mother, who found means, by a mixture of tenderness, severity, and strict justice, to

[1] *Physiologie des Écrivains*, p. 7.

make him love, respect, and obey her. From his mother he learnt the virtue of obedience." That greatness of character is, however, in a great measure personal to the individual, is shown from the fact that out of a numerous family Napoleon was the only one who achieved greatness, the others having had "greatness thrust upon them." Joseph, the eldest son, had the same mother as Napoleon; yet the Emperor was constantly complaining of Joseph's blundering incompetence. So Lord Nelson, who was one of the bravest, noblest, and most generous of men, was the brother of the clergyman who was created an earl because of the admiral's valour, and who seems, from his conduct to Lady Hamilton and Nelson's daughter, to have been one of the meanest of men.[1]

On the whole, however, no fact can be better ascertained than this—that the circumstances which surround and operate upon the tender nature of the child have the most lasting influence upon his future life; and that those impulses to conduct which are rooted the deepest and last the longest, have their origin near his birth. It cannot be otherwise. In the morning of life, when instruction is silently going on, the child is entirely in the mother's hands. Whom can he imitate so naturally as his mother? At the same time, she educates character. Man may direct the intellect, but woman directs the heart. "The mother only," says Richter, "educates humanely. . . . It is true that the sacrifices that women make for the world will be little known by it. Men govern and earn the glory; and the thousand watchful nights and sacrifices by which a mother purchases a hero or a poet for the state are forgotten—not once counted; for the mothers themselves do not count them; and so, one century after another, do

[1] Pettigrew, *Memoirs of Nelson*, ii. pp. 624, 625.

mothers, unnamed and unthanked, send forth the arrows, the suns, the storm-birds, and the nightingales of time. But seldom does a Cornelia find a Plutarch who connects her with the Gracchi. But as these two sons who bore their mother to the temple of Delphi were rewarded by death, so your guidance of your children will only find its perfect recompense at the termination of life."[1]

Notwithstanding the comparative meagreness of biography as to the mothers of our greatest men, occasional details are nevertheless to be gleaned from its pages, illustrative of the influence of women in the development of character. We have spoken of Napoleon's mother; but the mother of Cromwell was not less remarkable for her decision of purpose, her energy in business, and her strong common sense. "Ready," says Forster, "for the demands of fortune in its extremest adverse turn; of spirit and energy equal to her mildness and patience; who, with the labour of her own hands, gave dowries to five daughters, sufficient to marry them into families as honourable but more wealthy than their own; whose single pride was honesty, and whose passion love; who preserved in the gorgeous palace at Whitehall the simple tastes that distinguished her in the old brewery at Huntingdon; and whose only care, amidst all her splendour, was for the safety of her beloved son in his dangerous eminence."[2]

Hampden, the patriot, was related to Cromwell by the female side—his mother, Elizabeth Cromwell, being sister to Oliver's father. One of her daughters, John Hampden's sister and Oliver's cousin, married Squire Waller of Agmondesham; and their only son was Edmund Waller, the poet.

[1] J. P. Richter, *Levana: or the Doctrine of Education.*

[2] Forster, *Life of Oliver Cromwell* (Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia*), i. p. 9.

St. Beuve was of opinion that great poets more usually inherit their genius and temperament from their mother. On the contrary, Swedenborg held that man takes his soul from his father, and his body from his mother. This was his own case, though there are many memorable exceptions. St. Beuve says: "Those who seek in the parents of great men the trace and origin of brilliant careers,—those who seek in the mothers of Walter Scott, Byron, and Lamartine,[1] the secret of the genius of their sons, will remember the melancholy and at the same time the highly-cultivated character of Madame de Chateaubriand." At the same time St. Beuve adds that one of Chateaubriand's paternal uncles, a priest, was a poet, and that another uncle devoted himself to learned and historical research.[2]

Walter Scott's mother was the daughter of Professor Rutherford of Edinburgh; a woman of great sagacity. She had a considerable taste for letters, and encouraged her son in his pursuits, of which his father,—an ordinary man, and a stern Presbyterian,—knew nothing. Writing to George Ellis, Scott said of his ancestry: "My grandfather was a horse-jockey and cattle-dealer, and made a fortune; my great-grandfather was a Jacobite and traitor (as the times called him) and lost one; and after him intervened one or two half-starved lairds, who rode a lean horse, and were followed by leaner greyhounds; gathered with difficulty a hundred pounds from a hundred tenants; fought duels, cocked their hats, and called themselves gentlemen."[3]

Catherine Gordon of Gight, the mother of Lord Byron,

[1] St. Beuve also mentions the sisters of Lamartine. Royer-Collard, who personally knew them, spoke of them as charming and melodious, like "a nest of nightingales."

[2] *Portraits Contemporains*, i. p. 22.

[3] Lockhart, *Life of Scott* (8vo edition), p. 231.

was a woman of extreme quickness and vehemence of feeling, and of violent and ill-regulated temper. Most probably she supplied that Celtic passion which gave such a *vis* to the poetry of her son. In *Don Juan*, Byron boasts that he was "half a Scot by birth, and bred a whole one." His mother's fitfulness and waywardness doubtless exercised a powerful influence upon his character, which showed itself in the morbid wilfulness and defiant bitterness of his short but brilliant career. Careworn, unhappy, great yet weak, he carried about with him through life the burden of his maternal inheritance.

Of other poets, Gray and Cowper derived their poetic instincts from their mothers, to whom they were ardently attached. Gray wrote to a friend, after the death of his mother: "I felt then, with all my full heart, that one can have but one mother." Cowper's mother, Anne Donne, was descended from Donne the poet. Swift also was of true poetic descent, for his mother was a Herrick, and his grandmother a Dryden. Thomson derived his poetic instincts from his mother, who was a woman of uncommon natural powers, and gifted with a great warmth of imagination. Southey speaks with great feeling and affection of his mother. "Never," says he, in his *Autobiography*, "was a human being blessed with a sweeter temper or happier disposition. She had an excellent understanding, and a readiness of apprehension which I have rarely known surpassed. In quickness of capacity, in the kindness of her nature, and in that kind of moral magnetism which wins the affection of all within her sphere, I never knew her equal."

Fontenelle acknowledges that he derived his gifts from his mother, the sister of Corneille; while Charlotte Corday was lineally descended from another sister. De Tocqueville's mother was the grand-daughter of Malesherbes.

Ballanche derived his physical constitution from his father, but, "like most celebrated men," says St. Beuve, "he inherited his feeling and sentiment from his mother."[1] Manzoni's mother was daughter of the Marquis of Beccaria, the political philosopher, author of the celebrated *Treatise on Crimes and Punishments*. Kant, the German philosopher, was accustomed to declare that he owed to the ascendancy of his mother's character the severe inflexibility of his own moral principles. Sir John Moore, who fell at Corunna, had for his father Dr. Moore, the author of *Zeluco* and many other works, and for his mother the daughter of Professor Simson of the University of Glasgow,—a woman of extraordinary force of character.

Many other instances might be mentioned,—such as Lord Chief-Justice Mansfield, whose mother—a woman of character and ability, descended from Drummond of Hawthornden,—while his father was a good-for-nothing man of fashion. The mother of Lord-Chancellor Erskine was a woman of strong judgment; it was by her advice that her son forsook the navy, and educated himself for the bar, of which he proved so great an ornament. The Duke of Wellington also greatly resembled his mother, both in features and person. "She was," says Mr. Gleig, "a woman of great ability and strength of character;" while his father, the Earl of Mornington, was chiefly distinguished for his love of music,—his glee of "Here in Cool Grot" being still admired. The Napiers also were sons of a noble, beautiful, and heroic woman, Lady Sarah Lennox, the last surviving great-grand-daughter of Charles II. Lord Brougham's mother, for whom he had always a tender regard, was the niece of Professor Robertson, the historian. She was a woman of strong intellectual powers, while his

[1] *Portraits Contemporains*, i. p. 300.

father was a country gentleman of very ordinary qualities. Baron Cuvier was the son of a half-pay officer, quite undistinguished; but his mother was a woman of superior character, who assiduously devoted herself to her son's education. Although she did not herself know Latin, she made him repeat his lessons to her, taught him to draw, encouraged him to read works in history and literature, and developed in him that passion for knowledge, and that curiosity for all things animate and inanimate, which, to use Cuvier's own words, "formed the mainspring of my life." Madame de Sévigné was also repeated in her children,—in her son the Chevalier, who was so full of grace and spirit, and in her daughter Madame de Grignan, in whom, says St. Beuve, "we see reason supreme in all its dignity and state."

Before leaving this subject, there is one notable circumstance to be mentioned in connection with the moral character of families. Where the mother is good and virtuous—no matter whether the father be reckless, profligate, or debased—she can by the influence of her example, and the coercive power of her gentleness and affection, save her children, and bring them up to virtuous courses in life. But when her character is bad—in spite of the excellence and goodness of the father—the cases are exceedingly rare in which any good comes of the children. No mere educational advantages, no surroundings of wealth or comfort, will compensate for the want of good mothers. It is they who mainly direct the influences of home—Home, which is the seminary not only of the social affections, but of the ideas and maxims which govern the world. Nations are gathered out of nurseries, and the leading-strings of children become in the hands of good mothers the reins of moral government.

Many men of mark have been equally fortunate in both

parents, and were thus doubly wellborn. Of these Lord Bacon was a notable instance. His father, Sir Nicholas Bacon, held the great seal for the first twenty years of Elizabeth's reign. He was a man of high culture, of noble character, and eminent alike as a lawyer and statesman; for he ranked next to Burleigh amongst the great men of his time. Bacon's mother was Anne Cooke, one of the daughters of the learned Sir Anthony Cooke. She was a woman of uncommon learning and numerous accomplishments,—a good Greek and Latin scholar, and acquainted with most of the modern languages. She translated Ochine's sermons from the Tuscan, and Bishop Jewel's *Apology* from the Latin. Her three sisters were equally learned and accomplished. Mildred, the eldest, married the great Lord Burleigh, and was described by Roger Ascham as the best Greek scholar amongst the women of England, with the exception of Lady Jane Grey. Lady Burleigh's son Robert, Earl of Salisbury and Lord High-Treasurer, was a man of great energy and far-reaching sagacity; he was acknowledged to be one of the ablest ministers of his time. Of the two remaining sisters, Elizabeth wrote epistles and elegies in Greek and Latin, as well as made translations from the French; and the third sister, Katherine, was famous for her scholarship in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, as well as for her talent in poetry. Queen Elizabeth herself was a proficient in languages, being learned in Latin and Greek, as well as in French, Spanish, Italian, and German.

Luther, Tasso, Schiller, Goethe, Burns, and Wesley, were alike fortunate in both parents. Luther's mother has been described as "a virtuous, chaste, and God-fearing girl, the pride of Moerha."[1] His father, John, was a man

[1] Audin, *Histoire de Martin Luther*.

of unsophisticated honesty and firmness of purpose; his character was not inaptly symbolised by his arms—a hammer on a granite block. Tasso's father, Bernardo, was a poet of considerable distinction, though his fame has been thrown into the shade by that of his son; while his mother was a woman of the most tender and beautiful character. During the exile of her husband, she carefully nurtured the genius of her son, who warmly returned her affection.[1] Schiller inherited his mother's nature, closely resembling her in face, form, and temperament. He had the same tall and slender figure, the same light hair and weak eyes, the same broad forehead and melancholy expression of countenance. The mother, like her son, was pious, earnest, and enthusiastic, had a keen relish of the beauties of nature, and was passionately fond of music and poetry. But Schiller's father also was a man of singular probity and excellence of character, and in the midst of difficulties held on his way as a diligent cultivator of philosophy and science. Goethe, too, exhibited in his character the mingled excellence of both his parents. "I inherited from my father," he said, "a certain sort of eloquence calculated to enforce my doctrines on my auditors, and from my mother I derived the fancy of representing all that imagination can conceive, with energy and vivacity." She was a woman of strong good sense, brimful of affection, a charming letter-writer, and in all respects a most estimable woman. An enthusiastic

[1] Moore, in his *Life of Byron*, says: "In many instances, the mothers of illustrious poets have had reason to be proud no less of the affection than of the glory of their sons; and Tasso, Pope, Gray, and Cowper are among these memorable examples of filial tenderness. In the lesser poems of Tasso, there are few things so beautiful as his description, in the "Canzone to the Metauro," of his first parting with his mother:—

> "Me dal sen dalla madre empia fortuna
> Pargoletto divelse," etc.

admirer of her son, after a lengthened interview with her, said: "Now do I understand how Goethe has become the man that he is."

Burns, the poet, inherited his intellectual qualities from his father—an excellent man, full of good sense, and manly in character. Burns acknowledged that he was indebted to him for whatever wisdom he possessed. "I have met," he adds, "with but few who have understood men, their manners and their ways, equal to him." Burns resembled him also in his irritable and melancholy temperament, which cast so heavy a shadow upon his own life. But he also resembled his mother, who is described as "a very sagacious woman." Like the mother of Scott, she early kindled the genius of her son by reciting to him the ancient ballads of his country. And thus the boy's poetic nature was nurtured and expanded through the influence of parental example and affection.

John Wesley was equally well endowed by his father and mother. The Wesleys[1] were a staunch, self-reliant, persevering breed of men. For four generations at least, various members of the family were eminent as ministers and clergymen, and stout vindicators of the rights of conscience. The Rev. Bartholomew Wesley, the great-great-grandfather of John Wesley, was Nonconformist minister at Charnmouth, near Lyme, in the time of the Commonwealth. He continued staunch to his principles, and was

[1] It is said that the blood of the Wellesleys runs in the Wesley veins. Garrett Wellesley, Esq., of Dungannon, M.P. for Meath, considering the Wesleys to be of his family, offered to make Charles, John Wesley's brother, his heir, provided he would go over and settle in Ireland and relinquish his intention of going to Oxford. The offer was not accepted, and Mr. Wellesley left his property and his name to his cousin, Richard Colley, afterwards created Baron Mornington, father of the first Earl of Mornington, and grandfather of the first Duke of Wellington.

ejected from his living at the Restoration, and died shortly after. His son, the Rev. John Wesley, M.A., was an eminent oriental scholar. He was appointed vicar of Winterborne, Whitechurch, Dorset; and was also, like his father, ejected from his living at the Restoration. He had been frequently imprisoned, as well as fined; nevertheless he continued to preach; but after his last imprisonment he died at the early age of thirty-four. The Rev. Samuel Wesley, son of the martyr and of his wife, a niece of the Rev. Thomas Fuller, the Church historian, was the father of John and Charles Wesley, founders of the Methodist connection. Samuel Wesley was a man of vigorous mind and strong convictions. He went to Oxford with a few pounds in his pocket, entered himself at Exeter College as a sizar or servitor, obtained a scholarship, and got upon the foundation. He worked his way to a B.A., proceeded to London and was ordained. He served as a curate in London for a year; then as chaplain on board a man-of-war for another year; and after two more years' service as a London curate, he was appointed to the small living of South Ormsby in Lincolnshire. When James II. published his Order in Council commanding his Declaration for Liberty of Conscience to be read in all the churches, Wesley was urged to support the measures of the court and to comply with the King's order; but he not only refused to read the royal Declaration, but preached a sermon against it, before an audience composed partly of courtiers, soldiers, and informers. The Revolution of 1688 took place, and he both spoke and wrote in support of the new order of things. In 1693 he was appointed to the living of Epworth in Lincolnshire, and it was in the parish parsonage that John Wesley was born.

Wesley's mother was also a remarkable woman. She

was the daughter of another Nonconformist minister, who had been ejected at the Restoration—the eminent Dr. Samuel Annesley, a near relation of the Irish Earl of Anglesey. Like her husband she also chose her own path in religion, and after conscientious inquiry she left the Dissenters and joined the Church. She was a woman of strong convictions in politics as well as religion, and being an adherent of the Stuarts, she declined to say Amen to the prayer for King William, which occasioned the temporary alienation of her husband, who supported the Revolution of 1688. She was an exemplary and devoted mother, and trained her children (of whom there were nineteen in all) in the ways of honesty, virtue, and goodness. During her husband's absences at Convocation, there being no afternoon service on Sundays, she prayed with her family at home, read a sermon, and afterwards engaged with them in religious conversation. The parishioners sought to be allowed to attend these meetings, and at last Mrs. Wesley consented. But more persons came than her largest apartment could hold. The matter was represented to her husband during his absence, in such a light that he wrote home, requesting her to desist from such assemblages, or at all events to obtain some recognised canonical person to read for her. She replied to his letter, vindicating her conduct in such a frank, sincere, and sensible way, that he offered no further objection to her Sunday readings and conversations. Such was the mother of the Wesleys; and there can be little doubt that her teaching and example exercised no slight influence upon the character of her sons. Southey, in his *Life of Wesley*, says, "John and Charles were at this time under their mother's care; she devoted such a proportion of time as she could afford to discourse with each child by itself, on one night of the week, upon

the duties and the hopes of Christianity; and it may well be believed that these circumstances of their childhood had no inconsiderable influence upon their proceedings when they became the founders and directors of a new community of Christians."[1]

But although these and other instances might be cited to show that capacity and talent and character descend from father and mother, or from the mother alone, the cases are still more numerous where they are transmitted directly through the male line. "Like father like son" is an old maxim. The same features, as well as the same talents, are sometimes handed down for centuries. A singular statement was made in the *Times* by the late Mr. Tom Taylor, in his notice of a portrait of John Wycliffe in the possession of the Earl of Denbigh. Mr. Taylor says: "it is a curious incidental verification of the head, that a Yorkshire clergyman still living, one of the sons of the last Wycliffe of Gales, was accosted in Geneva by a German who had devoted himself to the study of Wycliffe's works and history; and asked whether he was any relation to the celebrated English reformer." The German was greatly delighted when he learnt the story of the Yorkshireman's descent. The transmission of a family face might also be illustrated by a comparison of the features of the first Lord Shaftesbury with those of the seventh Lord Shaftesbury, the distinguished philanthropist.

But we have already referred to the curious resemblances of faces and features in the portrait galleries of ancient families. Take, however, the descent of talents and artistic qualities—in painters as well as musicians. Raphael's father was a painter of merit, and the first teacher of his still more distinguished son. Titian's brother, son, and

[1] Southey, *Life of Wesley* (edition 1864), p. 13.

grandson, were all artists of merit. There were three Bellinis, Venetian artists, the father and two sons, of whom Giovanni, the second son of Jacopo, was by far the most eminent. The Sangallos were a family of Italian artists and architects, of whom four achieved high reputation. The three Caraccis, kinsmen, were amongst the greatest painters of Italy. Niccolo Abati, the celebrated Italian fresco painter, had a brother distinguished as a horse and battle painter, and his son and grandson were both artists of ability. The five Bassanos, father and four sons, were all painters of reputation. Canova's father worked in marble, and was also a sculptor.

It has been the same in France. The three sons of Jacob Sigisbert Adam, of Nancy, like their father, were all eminent sculptors in the early part of last century. So were the four Coustous, — Antoine Coysevox, and his two nephews, Nicolas and Guillaume, while Guillaume the younger, son of the last, carried off the grand prize of the Academy. The Basires were a family of engravers, who handed down the art to sons and grandsons. The Picarts were another family of engravers, of whom Bernard, the last, was the most distinguished. There were four Vernets, all painters,—father, son, grandson, and great grandson. The first flourished at the beginning of last century, and the last within our own time.

The same artistic lineage is traceable in the Low Countries. Thus Cuyp and Paul Potter were both the sons of painters. The younger Matsys had for his father Quentin Matsys; his mother also was the daughter of a painter. The two Teniers were father and son. The three Vanderveldes were father, son, and grandson. Rafaël Mengs was the son of a painter of moderate ability. Among ourselves there have been a few similar instances. Nollekens was the son of a

sculptor. The four Stones were statuarists,—father and three sons.[1] The two Pickersgills were uncle and nephew. The five Nasmyths of Edinburgh, father, son, and three daughters, were painters; perhaps a sixth might be added,—the inventor of the steam-hammer, who is also an artist.

Then as regards musicians. The two Scarlattis, father and son, were alike distinguished; there was also a grandson, a musical composer, though of less distinction than either of his predecessors. The whole of the Bach family seem to have been musical. The founder was Veit Bach, the miller of Presburg, who lived early in the sixteenth century, and for six generations the musical faculty of the race was transmitted without a break. Down to the middle of last century there were fifty-eight male descendants of Veit, all of whom, according to Forkel, were professors of music.[2] The genius of the family culminated in John Sebastian Bach; four of his sons and five of his daughters were more or less eminent in the art. Beethoven's father and grandfather were musicians by profession. Weber's father was a musical fanatic, fiddling everywhere, in the streets and in the fields. Mozart's father was a musician of ability,—vice-capellmeister and composer to the Archbishop of Salzburg; but we shall afterwards find what a falling off there was in the son of Mozart himself. Haydn's father played the harp, "without," it is said, "knowing a note of music." Rossini's father was a horn-blower in the orchestra of a travelling company. Mendelssohn came of a family more distinguished for learning than for music; his grandfather being Moses Mendelssohn, the celebrated linguist and philosopher.[3]

[1] The following is on their monument in St. Martin's Church :—

"Four rare Stones are gone,
The father and three sons."

[2] *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, 1823.

[3] It may be mentioned that Milton inherited his musical tastes from

In many families the talent for learning and politics seems to be hereditary. The Scaligers, father and son, were equally great as scholars and as critics. So were the two Struves, George Adam and his son Burchard Gotthelf; though several members of the family had held high offices in the state as lawyers and statesmen. Gerard and Isaac Vossius, father and son, were the greatest scholars of their time. So were the two Casaubons, father and son, alike distinguished for their learning. The two Aldinis, Giovanni and Antonio,—the one distinguished as a statesman and the other as a philosopher,—were the nephews of Galvani, the discoverer of galvanism. The Strozzis of Florence were celebrated for their eminence as scholars and politicians during three centuries. Another branch of the same family, settled at Ferrara, was remarkable for the number of poets and critics which it contained. The Stephenses (Étiennes), originally French, were great printers and scholars. No fewer than ten members of the family achieved the highest eminence in scholastic literature during more than two centuries. The Basnage family were equally eminent as preachers, lawyers, and scholars. The D'Aubignes of Geneva, originally French, produced, during three centuries, persons of great eminence as scholars, divines, and historians. The three brothers Schlegel were almost equally great as scholars and critics. In the United States we find three members of the Adams family—John Adams, President; John Quincey Adams, and Charles Francis Adams—all eminent for their ability as statesmen. The three Mathers—Richard, Increase, and Cotton,—father, son, and grandson—were alike eminent in connection with

his father, who was an excellent musician and composer, though a scrivener; some of his compositions being preserved in Burney's *History of Music*.

divinity. The tombstone erected to their memory in Dorchester churchyard, Massachusetts, bears the following inscription :—

> "Under this stone lies Richard Mather,
> Who had a son greater than his father,
> And eke a grandson greater than either."

The descent of heroic qualities in the male line is strikingly illustrated by the history of the members of the House of Nassau. They first emerged into historical notice in the middle of the eleventh century. The elder branch remained in Germany, ascended the Imperial throne in the thirteenth century in the person of Adolphus of Nassau, and gave to the country many electors, bishops, and generals. The younger and more illustrious branch led the Dutch in their struggle for freedom against the Imperial power of Spain and France. William I. of Orange, "William the Silent," as he was called, was the first to head the Dutch in their fight against the tyranny of Charles V. and his son Philip II. He had strong enemies to contend against in the Duke of Alva, Don John of Austria, and Alessandro Farnese of Parma, supported by powerful Spanish and Italian armies. But he contended against them with success, and eventually established the famous Treaty of Utrecht, which formed the lasting basis of the Dutch Republic.[1]

A price was set upon his head, and he was assassinated by an agent of his enemies; but his work was continued by Maurice, Prince of Nassau, who was elected stadtholder in

[1] The talents and virtues of the Nassau family were continued in the female line. Charlotte, Duchess of Tremoüelle, was the daughter of William second Prince of Orange; and it was her daughter, Charlotte, married to Lord Strange,—afterwards Earl of Derby,—who conducted the defence of Lathom House against the Parliamentary army,—one of the most remarkable exploits of that chivalrous age.

his father's stead, and with the help of the English forces he was able to rid Holland of the tyranny of Spain. His half-brother, Frederick Henry, succeeded him; and then came William III., Prince of Orange, the second conquerer of England. Indeed the two histories of Mr. Motley—the *Rise of the Dutch Republic* and the *History of the United Netherlands*—are the best of all monuments to the heroic valour of the men of the House of Nassau.

Statesmanship also seems to be hereditary. The Stanleys of the reign of Edward II. and III. have their representatives in the reign of Victoria; and the Cecils of the reign of Elizabeth are represented by the present Lord Salisbury. The Russells of the reign of Charles II. have still their modern representatives. The Scotch family of Beaton or Bethune continued statesmen, churchmen, and diplomatists for more than two hundred years. Among modern statesmen we find the two Pitts, father and son; the two Foxes, father and son—Lord Holland and Charles James Fox,—to whom might be added the late Lord Vassal Holland; the two Peels, father and son, and their successor, the Speaker of the House of Commons; the two Cannings, father and son, as well as "the great Elchie"—Lord Stratford Canning (de Redcliffe). The Temples have also been distinguished for their hereditary gifts of learning, eloquence, and statesmanship, which culminated in the late Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister.

Distinction in law and literature also seem to run in families. Mr. Francis Galton has, in his *Hereditary Genius*,[1] given an elaborate account of the judges of England between 1660 and 1865, from which it appears that a large number of them possessed one or more eminent relations, though it

[1] Francis Galton, F.R.S., *Hereditary Genius: an Inquiry into its Laws and Consequences*, 1869.

must be confessed that the greater number, and those the most distinguished, had no relations likely to advance their position in society or in law.

Besides the above instances, the Sheridans seem to have possessed the most striking hereditary talent for several generations. The first man of reputation in the family was Dr. Thomas Sheridan, the intimate friend and choice companion of Jonathan Swift. He was a scholar, wit, and musician, but at the same time slovenly, indigent, and utterly ignorant of the value of money. His son, "Manager Tom," was celebrated as an actor and theatrical manager. He was also the author of a *Life of Dean Swift*, and of a *Dictionary of the English Language.*

The son of "Manager Tom" was the Right Honourable Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the author of some of our best plays—the scholar, wit, and orator,—who excelled his father and grandfather, and surpassed them in his reckless gaiety and improvidence. But the line of genius did not stop with him. His son Tom was a man of great ability, though the sad fortunes of his father threw a blight upon his life; but his daughters, the Honourable Mrs. Norton and the Honourable Mrs. Blackwood, both women of genius, restored the intellectual reputation of the family, which is now represented by the Earl of Dufferin, the noble upholder of the reputation of England in India.

The Coleridges also have been a family of ability, in poetry as in law. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the poet and dramatic critic; his son Hartley, the poet, in many respects like his father; another son, the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, who rose to distinction as a clergyman and an author; and Sara Coleridge, the only daughter, who also achieved much fame as a poet and author. Henry Nelson Coleridge was a nephew of Samuel Taylor; he was distinguished as a

scholar, author, and lawyer, But the most celebrated lawyer of the family was Sir John Taylor Coleridge, also a nephew of the poet, who, after a triumphant career at Oxford, embraced the law, and rose step by step to one of the highest offices on the bench of judges. He was a man of great literary attainments, and was for a time, until almost overwhelmed by business, editor of the *Quarterly Review.* The present legal representative of the family is Lord Coleridge, Lord Chief-Justice of England.

The Tytlers, of Woodhouselee, Edinburgh, have produced a like succession of men eminent as historians and lawyers. William Tytler, author of the *Inquiry into the Evidence against Mary Queen of Scots*, had for his son Lord Woodhouselee, the judge and historian; and for his grandson Alexander Fraser Tytler, author of one of the best histories of Scotland. His two daughters are also well-known as writers of admirable historical tales.

The Taylors of Ongar have also been an essentially literary family, numbering amongst them Charles Taylor, the learned editor of *Calmet;* Isaac Taylor, who, though the inventor of the beer-tap and the perfector of a machine for engraving upon copper (which occupied him seven years), was also the author of the *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, and other works which had an immense reputation in their day; Jeffrey Taylor, author of the *Apostolic Age in Britain;* Anne and Jane Taylor, authors of many highly popular works; and the Rev. Isaac Taylor, eldest son of the author of the *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, and himself the author of *Words and Places* and other memorable works, who is now the living representative of the family.

The Kemble family presents perhaps the most remarkable group of actors and actresses ever known. Amongst them we find Roger Kemble (some say the original name

was Campbell), manager of a theatre at Prescott in Lancashire, about the middle of last century. From him were descended John Philip Kemble, Sarah Kemble (afterwards Mrs. Siddons), George Stephen Kemble, Frances Kemble, Charles Kemble, and Elizabeth Kemble. They were all great actors and actresses. In the third generation we find Adelaide Kemble (afterwards Sartoris), and Frances Kemble (afterwards Butler), both of whom arrived at distinction as actresses, the latter also as an author. The old actor Macklin, when close upon a hundred years old, addressing John Kemble, said to him: "Sir, I have known your family from generation to generation. I have seen you act, young man; and I have seen your father, sir; and I have seen your grandfather, sir: *he* was a great actor." It may be added that John Mitchell Kemble, son of Charles, was one of the greatest Anglo-Saxon scholars of his age.

There are other cases where the hereditary talent has not lasted so long, but proceeded merely from the father to the son or daughter. For instance, there were the two Colmans, the two Keans, the two Wedgewoods, the two D'Israelis, the two Mills, the two Stewarts, the two Allan Ramsays, the two Macaulays, the two Charles Lyells, the two Stephensons, the two Brunels. We have also Necker the financier, and his celebrated daughter, Madame de Staël; Dr. Burney and his daughter, Madame D'Arblay; Edgeworth and his daughter, the well-known novelist; Thackeray and his daughter, Mrs. Ritchie, author of *Elizabeth* and other novels. Lucas, in his work on heredity, says that the ascending movement of the exalted faculties of most founders of families is nearly always arrested at the third generation, seldom goes on to the fourth, and hardly ever transcends the fifth. And very often it never goes beyond the first generation, beginning and stopping there.

To most persons it might at first sight appear absurd that the talent for science and scientific research ran in the blood; yet there are many singular illustrations of this form of heredity. The Cassinis, whose names are so intimately identified with the history of astronomy, held the office of French Astronomers-Royal in succession for a hundred and twenty-two years. There were no fewer than eight members of the Bernouilli family, of different degrees of distinction, during four generations. Like the Cassinis, they were principally distinguished for their mathematical genius. The Gregories of Aberdeen—though connected with Rob Roy Macgregor—were distinguished during three generations for their ability in physical science. About the middle of the seventeenth century James Gregory, a proficient in mathematics, invented the reflecting telescope; while his brother David, also eminent in mathematics, was the first person in Scotland who possessed and used a barometer. The descendants of the two brothers extended the reputation of the family, more particularly in connection with natural science; and it is stated by Chalmers, in his *Biographical Dictionary* that not fewer than sixteen Gregories at different times held professorships, principally in Scotch universities. The Bells were another Scotch family, distinguished alike in law, surgery, and physiology, of whom Sir Charles Bell was one of the last but not the least eminent. The Monros of Edinburgh were distinguished as anatomists during four generations. The Hunters, William and John, achieved a European reputation, their sister being the mother of the celebrated Dr. Matthew Baillie and of Johanna Baillie, the poetess and dramatist. There were six Sowerbys, all more or less eminent as naturalists.

The Herschels, father and son, were alike great as

astronomers; and Caroline Lucretia, sister of the elder Herschel, was as close and as patient an observer as either, having discovered seven new comets by means of the telescope which her brother had made expressly for her use. In 1798 she published, at the expense of the Royal Society, a *Catalogue of Stars*, taken from Mr. Flamsteed's observations,—an astronomical work of great value. At the death of her brother, in 1822, she returned to Hanover at the age of seventy-two, to end her days there. But she was not idle; she continued her astronomical work, and in 1828 she completed a catalogue of the stars observed by her brother, for which the Astronomical Society of London awarded her their gold medal. She died in 1848, in her ninety-eighth year. The Darwins also have exhibited their talent for original investigation for four generations; Charles Darwin, the author of the *Origin of Species*, being the grandson of Dr. Darwin, poet and naturalist, as well as medical practitioner; while George Darwin, the son of Charles, came out second wrangler at Cambridge, and is distinguished for his knowledge of natural history and physiology.

One might suppose, from these and other instances, that heredity was universal. In mere physical formation it prevails to a large extent. You find such things as warts and squints running in families; and not only so, but thick skins and thin skins; scaly skins; six toes and six fingers; blindness and colour blindness; rickets and hare-lip; long arms and long legs; wooden heads and even wooden legs. Why wooden legs? There was a sea-going family on the south coast, famous for many generations for its naval captains and admirals. They were in many hard sea fights, and often came home mutilated, and required the carpenter's help to enable them to walk. Hence it came to be said that "wooden legs ran in the family."

Jeremy Bentham even held that snoring was hereditary. "If a Bentham," said he, "does not snore, he is not legitimate. My father snored, my mother snored, and if my nephew does not snore, he is an impostor."[1] But what is of even more importance than snoring, idiocy is hereditary. "We know," says Haller, in his *Elements of Physiology*,[2] "a very remarkable instance of two noble females who got husbands on account of their wealth, although they were nearly idiots, and from whom the mental defect has extended for a century into several families, so that some of all their descendants still continue idiots in the fourth and even the fifth generation."

A more ludicrous case is that of a rich tradesman, who, with his wealth, introduced his manners into an aristocratic family. When anything mean or shabby was done by his successors, the common remark was, "Oh! it is only the old skinner cropping up." In Smollett's novel of *Peregrine Pickle*, the hero finds a pretty young gipsy on the road, takes her home, dresses her like a lady, educates her, takes her to balls and dances with her. At last she was thought to be perfect. She went to a card party, where she found a distinguished lady cheating her; and then the virulence of her nature broke out at a rush; she abused her antagonist, cursed and swore at her, and left the room with abominable words and gestures—all in the old gipsy manner. "You cannot make a silken purse out of a sow's ear."

There is one thing that heredity does not influence; and that is genius, especially poetical genius. Though talent is hereditary in many families, genius is in others merely a life possession, like a knighthood. In the case of men of the greatest genius there does not seem to have been anything

[1] Bowring, *Memoirs of Bentham*, p. 567.
[2] *Elem. Physiol.*, lib. xxiv., sect. 2, § 8.

remarkable, either in father or mother. These isolated geniuses stand out solitary and alone amidst the generations to which they belong. Though they may have left descendants, the latter have sunk into the line of common men. There has been nothing before them in their race, and nothing after. Intellectually, they seem to have had neither father nor mother. They have been the makers of their own brains, and, like Marshal Junot, have been their own ancestors. The circumstances in which they were born, and amidst which they were trained and brought up, may have been more propitious for the development of their genius than their actual parentage. At the same time it must be admitted that genius defies analysis, and cannot be traced to its source. This has especially been the case with the great poets. They come like comets, depart on their course, and leave us wondering. Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, came and went. Shakespeare was the one man of his time — no Shakespeare before, none after. So we have only one Milton. Wordsworth's father and mother were ordinary persons. Byron was the one man of genius in his line. Shelley's origin was aristocratic but undistinguished. This poet was a practical contradiction to the hereditary theory. He was the one man of his race—a poetic ganglion, a throbbing nerve, an almost ethereal being. If genius were hereditary, what might we not expect from the son of Shelley the poet? Henry Crabb Robinson, in his *Diary*[1] says: "Mrs. Shelley came in with her son. If talent descended, what might he not be?—he, who is of the blood of Godwin, Mary Woolstonecraft, Shelley, and Mrs. Shelley! What a romance is the history of his birth!" Keats had no poetic lineage. His father was a livery-stable keeper, and his mother was only distinguished for her love

[1] *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, iii. p. 174.

of pleasure, which, indeed, occasioned the premature birth of the poet.[1]

The cases are very numerous where men of illustrious birth have shown no indications of the talent and genius which distinguished their progenitors. Indeed they have often displayed an exactly opposite character. The ancients, notwithstanding their regard for birth and nobility, were not insensible to the facts which stood against their theory. "Noble sons do not always spring from noble fathers," said Sophocles, "nor evil from evil; but there is no trusting to anything mortal." Themistocles was able to make his son a good horseman, but he failed to make him a good man. Aristides, Pericles, and Thucydides, alike failed with their sons. Germanicus, one of the wisest and most virtuous of Roman generals, and Agrippina, his wife, one of the most noble and virtuous of women, had six children, not one of whom displayed a particle of the goodness of their parents. Two of them—a son, Caius Cæsar, better known as Caligula; and a daughter, Agrippina,—earned an exceptional infamy by the baseness of their crimes. Agrippina was the mother of Nero, one of the greatest monsters of antiquity: yet Nero had Seneca for his tutor. The Emperor Marcus Aurelius, was a model of virtue and learning; while his son, the Emperor Commodus, was a monster of cruelty. Young Scipio, the son of Africanus, was a fool and a prodigal. Marcus, the drunkard, was the son of Cicero, who dedicated to him the famous work *De Officiis*. Arcadius and Honorius were the weak and unhappy sons of the great Theodosius.

To come to more recent times. No Paladin was more renowned for heroic piety than Count Jocelline of France, and yet he was succeeded by a son infamous for his drunk-

[1] Lord Houghton, *Life of Keats* (edition 1867), p. 3.

enness and luxury; who lost his father's principality, and died of hunger. The virtuous and warlike Edward I. of England was succeeded by his son, Edward II., the vicious and pusillanimous. The brother of the pious Saint Louis was the cruel Charles of Anjou.

For some years after Sir Thomas More's marriage his wife had only daughters, and prayed anxiously for a boy. At last the boy came, who, on arriving at man's estate, proved weak and simple. Sir Thomas said to his wife: "Thou prayedst so long for a boy, that he will be a boy so long as he lives." Tully, the controversial divine, had a boy who was a sorry fool, and was quite the reverse of his father. The son may strive to live on his sire's renown, yet forfeits all chance of obtaining any himself, except for his arrogant folly. A French proverb says: "Happy are the children whose fathers are d——d;" a rough way of saying, "Lucky are the sons who do not depend for respect on the virtues of their fathers."

Luther's son completely disappointed him; he was unruly and disobedient. Waller's eldest son was disinherited and sent to New Jersey as "wanting in common understanding." Richard Cromwell—Oliver's son—was wholly unlike his father and mother; he was indolent and apathetic, and glad to lay aside the great office of state to which he succeeded. The son of William Penn, the Quaker, was a roysterer, or what is commonly called a scamp. The son of John Howard, the philanthropist, was a vicious profligate, and his life was closed by the premature extinction of reason. Addison's only survivor was a daughter, of weak intellect. Lord Chesterfield wrote some remarkable letters to his son, enjoining politeness and good manners; and yet the son grew up ill-bred and a boor. Sir Walter Scott's son was a cavalry officer, who was ashamed of his father's

literary reputation, and boasted that he had never read his novels. Among other anomalies of descent, it may be added that Tom Paine (of the *Age of Reason*) had for his father a worthy Quaker of Thetford; William Godwin was the son of an Independent minister at Lowestoft; and Franklin's son was a loyalist, and died a pensioner of the British Government.

Even in art, the same anomalies prevail. Voltaire has observed, in his *Life of Molière*,—"on a remarqué que presque tous ceux qui se sont fait un nom dans les beaux-arts les ont cultivés malgré leurs parents, et que la nature a toujours été en eux plus forte que l'education." It is quite true, that in the greater number of cases, artists have had to force their way up amidst the greatest obstacles: Claude Lorraine, the pastry-cook; Tintoretto, the dyer; Giotto, the peasant-boy; Zingaro, the gypsy; and artists in our own country, such as Opie and Romney, who were carpenters; Northcote, a watchmaker; Jackson, a tailor; Etty, a printer; and Lough, a stone-mason. Reynolds said that it was not birth that made the artist, but opportunity, application, and industry. Nature must, it is true, supply the gift; but it is only continuous labour that can develop it. Rembrandt, one of the greatest of artists, had a son, Titus, whom he carefully trained to be a painter; but all his efforts were failures, and the only reputation that Titus achieved was—that he was the son of his father.

When Blanquini, the musician, was at Milan, he desired to pay his respects to the son of the celebrated Mozart. He found him in his office, saluted him, and congratulated him upon his glorious birth. Young Mozart was somewhat gruff, and answered only with monosyllables. "But really, sir," said the visitor, "is it true that you are the son of the great Mozart?"—"Yes."—"You have come then into this

country of the arts, protected by the shadow of your father."—"Umph!"—"I hope, sir, you take great pleasure in the piano or the violin?"—"What the devil do you take me for? I don't love music."—"What? are not you a musician?"—"No sir, I am a banker. This is the music that I like;" and thrusting his hand into a pile of louis d'ors, he let them fall, jingling with the sound of gold, upon the counter. "That," he said, "is the music that I like." Blanquini left his presence in disgust.

The ignominious end of great lines is common. The noble line of Hastings,—descended from kings, with the blood of Plantagenet in its veins, as well as that of the pious Countess of Huntingdon,—expired in the person of a companion of blacklegs. "The tenth transmittor of a foolish face," as Byron says, "amounts to little." The old line of Staffords was last traced to a cobbler who never went *ultra crepidam*. The De Veres closed in a twentieth earl, who tainted his noble blood with shame. A descendant of the Dudleys took toll at a turnpike within sight of the towers that gave name to the barony of which he was co-heir. The last of the Plantagenets officiated as a sexton at a West End church. The *Newgate Calendar* contains the end of one noble lord whose ancestors "came in with the Conqueror." The lineal descendant of Dermott MacMurrough, the last traitor-king of Leinster, was recently found working, under the name of Doyle, as a stone-mason at Liverpool. The representative of the Earl of Ulster, who flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, was recently a policeman in the Liverpool force. The grandson of one of the most eminent members of the Irish Parliament, who was not only distinguished as an orator but as a beautiful lyric poet, was recently acting as barman in a spirit vault near the Liverpool Exchange. The last

descendant of Vasco de Gama acted as a butler. Such are a few among the many instances of degradation of lineage, as well as of the mutabilities of fortune.

"The king," says Landor, "may scatter titles and dignities till lords, like the swarm of Dons in Sancho's Island, shall become troublesome as so many flesh-flies; but he may not save those amongst whom he scatters them from rottenness and oblivion." "The Emperor," said Gregory the Great, "can make an ape be called a Lion, but he cannot make him become one." An illustrious birth can only be ennobled by virtue, and that is a title of nobility which the king cannot bestow. James I. sold his peerages for cash, at the same time declaring, "Na! na! I can mak a man a lord, but I canna mak him a gentleman!"

The noble chivalry of the heart must be held as an inalienable privilege, which is the gift of God alone. Hence the best among our great men are what are called *parvenus*. Persons of low origin may have noble minds, and become noble by their goodness, virtue, and works. The grand distinction which alone merits love and admiration is wholly independent of that adventitious splendour which, however it may adorn and assist, can never of itself constitute greatness. The son of a wool-stapler is the most distinguished man in English story, and the son of a butcher one of the most graceful of gentlemen in the round of English verse. Genius is like the wind, that bloweth where it listeth. Genius bursts through circumstances, and makes a way for itself. Patience seeks a way, but genius makes one.

The highest minds have been created rather than developed. We have seen families comparatively low in intellect, rise and bring out of their line a great genius. How is it that genius is breathed into one man, while it was dormant in his obscure father and mother? Is this by the

law of development or by the law of creation? It has been by the law of growth, as well as of development and creation. We breathe the breath of an independent life according to existing laws; and when the inspiration of genius begins, the law of creation acts as it has done from the beginning.

It is true that every man's mind is more or less influenced by circumstances and surroundings. Men are made by the times in which they live. Provided they inherit energy and force of will, their powers are developed by encounters with difficulty and obstruction, and they become famous. In the case of their sons the circumstances are different. They have not been influenced by encounter with difficulty; their way of life has been made too easy for them; they are satisfied to enjoy the celebrity of their fathers, and at length sink into the herd of common men.[1]

How many parvenus and adventurers have there been? Among the greatest—Shakespeare, Jonson, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Burns, and Wordsworth, among poets; Newton, Davy, Watt, and Faraday, among philosophers; Themistocles, Cæsar, William the Conqueror, Pizarro, Cortes, and Buonaparte among warriors; Burke, Sheridan, Canning, Peel, Lyndhurst, Cobden, and D'Israeli, among statesmen; Jeremy Taylor, Bunyan, Tillotson, Dr. Johnson, Richardson, Carlyle, among literary men and divines; Arkwright, Brindley, Maudslay, the Brunels, the Stephensons,

[1] "Je me bornerai à faire remarquer que le fils d'un homme distingué dans les sciences ou les lettres est rarement placé au milieu des circumstances qui ont concouru à la célébrité de son père, et qu'il lui est ordinairement plus agréable de jouier des résultats avantageux de cette célébrité, que de faire des efforts pour en acquérir une qui lui soit personnelle; et qu'enfin, il est plus commun de voir le fils d'un savant marcher dignement sur les traces de son père, que le fils d'un poéte s'illustre dans le culte des muses: l'imagination est-elle donc moins héréditaire que le jugement?" Tissot, *De la Santé des Gens de Lettres*, Édité par Boisseau, p. 87.

among mechanics and engineers; and nearly all the artists and sculptors.

America also is a country of parvenus. Though many men there have achieved greatness, very few of the more distinguished have been inheritors of fame and fortune. Washington, though a country farmer and surveyor, was almost the only gentleman by right of birth in that astonishing company of thinkers and actors. Franklin was originally a printer; Sherman, a shoemaker; Knox, a bookbinder; Green, a blacksmith; John Adams and Marshall, the sons of poor farmers; and Hamilton, the most subtle, fiery, and electrical genius of them all, was originally the clerk to a shopkeeper. Daniel Webster, the son of a farmer, was rescued from the occupation of a drover by the sagacity of Christopher Gore. Calhoun was the son of a tanner and currier; and the father of Henry Clay was of the poorest class of Baptist ministers; Thomas Corwin was a waggoner; Silas Wright, a mechanic; Abraham Lincoln, a rail-splitter, and then a worker on the flat boats which navigated the Mississippi; and the present President of the United States was originally a schoolmaster. De Bruyère finely said of such illustrious persons: "These men have neither ancestors nor posterity; they alone compose their whole race."

There is no doubt about the parvenus. They are the men who do the great work of the world. They quarry out its grandest thoughts, write the most enduring works, do the greatest deeds, paint the finest pictures, and carve the noblest statues. For the parvenus are of the people, belong to them, and spring from them. Indeed, they are the people themselves. In recognising the great parvenu spirit of this age we merely recognise what, in other words, is designated as the dignity of labour, the rights of industry, the power of intellect. For real honour is due to the man

who honestly carves out for himself, by his own native energy, a name and a fortune, diligently exercising the powers and faculties which belong to him as a man.

It has frequently been remarked that men of genius are for the most part childless. Many remain unmarried, and even when married they have left few children, and these soon die off. Mr. Croker, in his edition of the *Life of Johnson*, says: "It is remarkable that none of our great, and few even of our second-rate poets, have left posterity,—Shakespeare, Jonson, Otway, Milton, Dryden, Rowe, Addison, Pope, Swift, Gay, Johnson, Goldsmith, Cowper, have left no inheritors of their names." To these might be added Lord Byron and Sir Walter Scott, who have no male survivors. It seems as if it were ordained that the children of the brain are the only progeny of great men which are destined to endure. Sir Isaac Newton left no heir. The male branch of Sir Christopher Wren's family is extinct. The races of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, Brindley, Telford, Faraday, have ceased to exist. George Stephenson and his son Robert left no direct successor. Some of the great men above-mentioned were unmarried, so that no other issue remains but their Children of the Brain. "Surely," says Bacon, "a man shall see the Noblest works and Foundations have proceeded from Childless men; which have sought to express the Images of their Minds, when those of their Bodies have failed. So the care of Posterity is most in them that have no Posterity."[1]

[1] Essay VII.: "Of Parents and Children."

CHAPTER VI

THE LITERARY AILMENT: OVER BRAIN-WORK

Il ne faut pas se meconaître, nous sommes corps autant qu'esprit.—PASCAL.

"I'll tell it," said Smellfungus, "to the world." "You had better tell it to your physician."—STERNE, *of Smollett.*

Then give place to the physician, for the Lord hath created him: let him not go from thee, for thou hast need of him.—*Ecclesiasticus.*

Strength of Nature in Youth passeth over many Excesses which are owing a Man till his Age. Discerne of the comming on of Yeares, and think not to do the same Things still; for Age will not be Defied.—LORD BACON.

"Sir Dwarf," said I undauntedly, "thy head is very large, and thy feet and limbs somewhat small in proportion."—"I have crammed my head," he answered, "even to the overflowing, with knowledge; and I have starved my limbs by disuse of exercise and denial of sustenance!"—"Can I acquire wisdom in thy solitary library?"—"Thou mayest."—"On what conditions?"—"Renounce all gross and fleshly pleasures, eat pulse and drink water, converse with none but the wise and learned, alive and dead——"—"Why, this were to die in the cause of wisdom!"—SIR WALTER SCOTT: *Three years before his death.*

WE have seen that great men are great workers,—that some great men flower early, and that others flower late. Some, however, never flower at all. They do not reach maturity, but succumb in their struggle for greatness, and die in the midst of their efforts.

Southey said of Kirk White: "He fairly died of intense application. Cambridge finished him. When his nerves were already so overstrained that his nights were utter misery, they gave him medicines to enable him to hold out during examination for a prize! The horse won, but he died after the race!"

An Oxford student, speaking of a friend, said: "He read fifteen hours a day, and got a First, but, poor fellow, he also got a brain fever." Of another he said, "My friend was working for honours. One night we heard a tremendous row in his room, and going in to see what was the matter, we found him sprawling on the floor in an epileptic fit." Dr. Garnett, speaking of his mastery of the Iliad, said: "I finished it in a month, but it nearly finished me." He lived, however, to achieve a remarkable reputation as a philologist.

Ease and comfort are not the lot of those who endeavour to climb the steep of literary fame. The crown of the poet is often that of the martyr. There is an old and wise saying, "God has marked with an emphatic sign the fruit of the tree of knowledge: the fruit is sweet and savoury, but often it causes pain and death." The crown of bays conceals the circlet of thorns; and increase of knowledge is often the increase of sorrow.

"Man," said Esquirol, "is a nervous machine governed by a temperament." "The greatest hero is nothing," said Bolingbroke, "in a certain state of the nerves." Balzac described genius as an intermittent fever. "Heroic souls," said a saint, "have no bodies." "Courage, my soul," said a father of the church, "and let us defy the weakness of the body." But the body is not to be defied, and the spirit, great as it is, cannot triumph over matter. "Men of exalted intellect," said Pinel, "perish by their brains, and such is the end of many who endeavour to achieve fame and honour."

Poets and artists who produce their works under excitement, are nervously irritable from the very nature of their vocation. Their brain acts on their system like a sort of electric machine, constantly giving off nerve-force in currents or shocks, the exhausting effect of which is proportionate to

their intensity and duration. There is thus constant waste, which can only be restored by abundant rest. But if there be no rest, there is exhaustion, disorganisation, and destruction of the vital powers. "I have written," said Southey, "a short but very interesting account of Lucretia Davidson, an American poetess, killed, like Kirke White, by over-excitement, in her seventeenth year. It is a most effective story."[1]

It is said that Gounod, the great musical composer, is always attacked by a "mysterious illness" when one of his works is about to be produced; but the mystery is readily explained by the nervous excitement and brain-work which he had undergone during its composition. Goethe said that the composition of each of his great works was followed by an illness. Schiller, according to Carlyle, wrote his noblest works during the last fifteen years of his life; yet, as has been proved, no day of that period passed without its load of pain. Carlyle himself said to the students of Edinburgh that he found health and literary production incompatible, and that as soon as he had begun a work it kept him more or less out of sorts until it was finished. One of his last works, *Frederick the Great*, occasioned him a great deal of anxiety and worry; and Mrs. Carlyle said to the present author that she thought "it would kill him." The late Dr. Darwin could never work more than about three hours daily. Even talking excited him. When the author saw him at his house at Down, he said: "The conversation has become too exciting; you must allow me to retire."

Brain excitement reacts upon the nerves, the stomach, the heart, the liver, and indeed upon the entire vital framework of the system. We have few buxom and rosy-faced thinkers. "Tristes philosophi et severi," was the expres-

[1] Southey, *Life and Correspondence*, vi. p. 73.

sion of Varro; and observation shows them to be pallid, "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," if not melancholy and dyspeptic. The paleness of thinkers, and the early whiteness of their hair, resemble the "volcano covered with snow."

The action of the brain is a sort of vital combustion. It gives off fire and heat, and in doing so burns away like coals in a grate. Provided the fuel of food, sleep, and rest are regularly supplied, brain-work is salutary; but when the fuel is deficient, through dyspepsia, want of exercise, or sleeplessness, brain-work is exhausting and eventually destructive. The shrewd George Stephenson knew the mischiefs of trying to take too much out of one's self. When he found his friend Lindley exhausted and depressed by too excessive application to engineering—which is also a work of the brain—he said to him, "Now, Lindley, I see what you are after: you are trying to get thirty shillings out of your pound: my advice to you is—*give it up.*"

When the faculties of the human system are exercised in due proportion, and the vital functions are kept in unison, the result is health. Galen says: "Health is symmetry, Disease is deformity [Sanitas est symetria, morbus autem ametria]." But with students eager for promotion, the brain and nerves are exercised out of all proportion to the rest of their system, and the result is want of symmetry and want of health. Man becomes a ganglion; he is nervous everywhere—in his brain, his heart, his stomach, his skin, and even his toes. The most potent and delicate of organs is overworked, while muscular energy becomes atrophied.

No doubt the results of brain-work are valued, because they achieve power, wealth, and honour; but at what a cost are they often obtained. Over-work, over-pressure, wear and tear of brain, end many a glorious dream; and

even where the desired result is secured, it is at the price of permanent debility and ill-health. The observation of Frederick the Great, that man seems more adapted by nature for a postilion than for a philosopher, is not without some share of truth. Brain-work in moderation is unquestionably healthy, but brain-work in excess is the very reverse. All who work their brains too much—be they mathematicians, philosophers, lawyers, preachers, authors, or men of business—do so at the expense of physical health. The products of extreme mental labour, like the pearl in the oyster, are frequently accompanied by disease, if they are not the actual results of it.

In a state of health, the nervous irritability of the system is equitably distributed amongst the vital organs,—so much for the purposes of digestion, nutrition, circulation, and repairs of waste; but where it is for the most part absorbed by the brain—the organ of thinking—the other parts of the system necessarily suffer. Their functions become disturbed or partially suspended. The stomach is the first organ that is affected by mental emotion and anxiety. Hence dyspepsia, biliary disorders, gout, and the various maladies which afflict sedentary brain-workers.

Thus all who over-work their brains, do so at the expense of health. If the nervous system be too exclusively cultivated, the whole system is thrown out of gear; the symmetry of the organs, to use the words of Galen, is interfered with; there is no longer a proper unison and equilibrium, and they cease to be regular in the performance of their functions. Hence that weary stomach—the *bulimia doctorum!* Men may become rich and famous, but what are they without health? The trouble of brain-workers is not so much in earning their food as in digesting it. To use Vogel's just but rather ludicrous comparison: "Their

stomachs become "as weak as blotting-paper." Voltaire said of President Henault, so rich in gifts of nature and fortune: "It matters nothing—he *can't digest.*" Voltaire wrote to Lord Chesterfield: "My Lord Huntingdon tells me that you have a good stomach, which is worth more than a good pair of ears. I don't know which of these three evils is worst—to be blind, or deaf, or not to be able to digest."

A German physician has said that if we could penetrate into the secret foundations of human events, we should frequently find the misfortunes of one man caused by the liver of another.[1] "Without this accursed bile," said Napoleon, "we should gain no great battles." The Emperor's star certainly waned when his health began to fail. An ancient writer spoke of the stomach as "the father of the family." If this "father" be not properly nourished and rested, he becomes turbulent, vexed, provoked, and finally rebels. Sydney Smith said of indigestion: "Old friendships have been destroyed by toasted cheese: unpleasant feelings of the body produce corresponding sensations in the mind, and a great scene of wretchedness is sketched out by a morsel of indigestible and unguided food." Dr Johnson says "every man is a rascal when he is sick," meaning that, feeling pain, he becomes malevolent; and if this be true of great diseases, it is true in a less degree of the smaller ailments of the body. Hence Swift left the house of Pope, where he had been staying, saying that it was impossible two sick friends could live together!

"Good God!" said Pope, "what an incongruous animal is man! how unsettled in his best part, his soul; and how changeable and variable in his frame of body!—the constancy of the one shook by every notion, the temperament

[1] Feuchlersleben, *Mental Physiology.*

of the other affected by every blast of wind. What is man altogether but one mighty inconsistency? Sickness and pain is the lot of one half of him; doubt and fear the portion of the other What a bustle we make about passing our time, when all our space is but a point! What aims and ambitions are crowded into this little instant of our life, which, as Shakespeare finely words it, is rounded with a sleep!"

There are few of the great thinkers who have not been more or less troubled by dyspepsia. Calvin was a martyr to it, as well as to headache and sleeplessness. His only remedy was abstinence from food and drink: he took only one slight meal during the twenty-four hours. How different was he from the jovial Luther, whose maxim was "Wine, wife, and song." Yet he, too, was much distressed in his brain, complaining of "great pains in the head, and violent buzzing in the ear." "When I try to work," he said, "my head becomes filled with all sorts of whizzing, buzzing, thundering noises, and if I did not leave off on the instant, I should faint away." The devil, he thought, had something to do with it; but the real cause was over brain-work and disordered stomach. If he had ceased from his labour, he would have been cured; but that he could not and would not do. When Professor Muirhead of Glasgow complained of his health and stomach, his physician, over a bottle, advised him to have all his folios collected into a heap in the College Square and burnt, and then he would soon be well.

The poet Cowper suffered from the severest depression of spirits. His melancholy was so great that he was more than once driven to the verge of suicide. Yet bad digestion was the secret of his malady. Had proper attention been paid to his food and exercise, he might have been rescued

from the misery which he endured through life. Like Dr. Johnson, he might have acquired the power of "managing his mind," and even to a great extent his ailments. But all through his disorder the digestive organs were impaired and neglected; to use the words of his biographer, the process of digestion never passed regularly in his frame during the years he resided at Norfolk; and this little paragraph is the essence of the "history and mystery" of Cowper's malady.

Haydon the painter, amidst his other distresses, suffered from indigestion. All the evils of his life were aggravated by his habitual neglect of the conditions of physical health, and by the wear and tear of an unquiet life. In his autobiography he says, "I was obliged to lay by from deranged digestion. All painters seem to have suffered from this—all thinkers, in fact, whether painters or not." And again, "I am now convinced that depression of spirits is owing to repletion. . . . I am inclined to think that much of the pain and anxiety of mind I have suffered for the last four days arose from nothing more nor less than indigestion."[1]

Carlyle was a great sufferer from the same cause. From the time that he began his studies at Edinburgh until nearly the end of his life, he was a victim to indigestion. While at Kirkcaldy, in his twenty-fourth year, he vigorously described dyspepsia "like a rat gnawing at the pit of his stomach." He tried all remedies, with no effect. He took refuge in the pipe, but a "long hairy-eared jackass," as he described an Edinburgh physician, ordered him to give up tobacco and take mercury. He accordingly gave up tobacco, but the mercury did him no good. He did not, however, give up brain-work. He returned to smoking, and smoked to the end of his life. "Who is your

[1] Haydon, *Autobiography*, i. p. 156; ii. pp. 15, 173.

physician?" asked a friend. "My best physician," answered Carlyle, "is a horse." And in London he rode much and furiously, having more regard for his liver than for his beast. Speaking of the seven long years of pain he had experienced from dyspepsia, he said on one occasion: "Perhaps it has been a blessing in disguise. It has kept me clear of many temptations to degrade myself; and when I look back on my former state of mind I scarcely see how, except by sickness or some most grinding calamity, I could have been delivered out of it into the state proper for a man in this world."

Once, when upset by over-work and sleeplessness, he went down to smoke in the back yard. "Last night," he says (it was in June 1838), "I sat down to smoke in my night-shirt in the back yard. It was one of the beautifullest nights; the half moon, clear as silver, looked out as from eternity, and the great dawn was streaming up. I felt a remorse, a kind of shudder, at the fuss I was making about a sleepless night, about my sorrow at all, with a life so soon to be absorbed into the great mystery above and around me. Oh! let us be patient. Let us call to God with our silent hearts, if we cannot with our tongues."

One of the last letters that Pitt wrote was in answer to a friendly and affectionate letter which he had received from the Marquess Wellesley, in which Pitt desired to see him at the first possible moment, adding, "I am recovering rather slowly from a series of stomach complaints, followed by severe attacks of gout; but I believe I am now in the way of real amendment." Pitt, however, never rose from his sick-bed. It was said that he was killed by Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz, and the defeat of the coalition; but it was his troubled stomach and his repeated attacks of gout that eventually carried him off.

Gout is the disease of a select class. It is for the most part the rich man's disease, though there is also the "poor man's gout"—probably inherited from ancestors. For it is hereditary as well as acquired. Generally speaking, it is the result of repletion of food as well as drink, associated with deficient exercise. It has afflicted some of the ablest men in all ages; and is five times more frequent in men than in women. It may be regarded as a safety-valve of the over-worked brain and the over-filled stomach. Sydenham, the prince of practical physicians, was the first man minutely to describe the disease, and yet he himself died of it. Sydenham said of gout, "Unlike any other disease, it kills more rich than poor, more wise than simple. Great kings, emperors, generals, admirals, and philosophers have died of gout. Hereby nature shows her impartiality, since those which she favours in one way she afflicts in another." Besides being known as the rich man's disease, gout has also been described as the statesmen's disease, because of the numerous leading politicians who have been afflicted by it. Lord Burleigh, like many other Prime Ministers, was subject to gout. Queen Elizabeth, for this reason, always made him sit in her presence. She said: "My lord, we make much of you, not for your bad legs, but for your good head."[1]

[1] Amongst poets, literary men, and philosophers, who have suffered from gout may be mentioned Milton, Dryden, Congreve, La Rochefoucauld, Newton, Sydenham, Leibnitz, Gray, Alfieri, Linnæus, Storace, Stillingfleet, Dr. J. Gregory, Fielding, Rubens, Le Caille, Horace Walpole, Franklin, Sydney Smith, and others. Among warriors: Condé, Wallenstein, Marshal Saxe, and Lord Howe. Among politicians: Lord Burleigh, Hyde Earl of Clarendon, Earl of Strafford (beheaded), Turgot, the Earl of Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Wyndham; and to these may be added the Earl of Granville, the late Earl of Derby, and the Earl of Beaconsfield. The story told of the late Earl of Derby, though well known, is worth repeating. A

The wise man discovers, from experience, that he who uses his brains and his stomach too much, and his arms, legs, and muscles too little, is more likely to have gout, than another who uses his functions and faculties with moderation and economy. The gout, however, which comes by inheritance is very difficult to be got rid of. The late General T. Perronet Thompson, during the early part of his life, was a victim to gout, which he inherited from his father and grandfather. Though he led an active life, was for some time a midshipman in the Royal Navy, then a lieutenant in the Rifle Corps, and then an officer in the 14th Light Dragoons, he was always threatened with gout, and often greatly afflicted by it. Meanwhile, he had been governor of Sierra Leone, and escaped alive; for there used to be a saying that Sierra Leone had always two governors, one going out alive, the other coming home dead. He afterwards exchanged into the 17th Light Dragoons, then serving in India. During the seven years that he remained there, he saw a great deal of service; but his principal achievement was in getting rid of gout.

When he was first assailed by the disease, he called in the doctor, who desired him to give up port wine. The wine was given up, but the gout returned. He was then required to give up light wines, and for stimulants to take a little old brandy or spirits. He had colchicum, patience, and flannel, in abundance; but still he retained the gout. He gave up all stimulants whatever, and drank only cold or aerated water. The gout returned as usual. What was he to do next? He was ordered to give up beef—believed by

wine merchant, having forwarded a sample of wine which he averred to be a specific for gout, subsequently wrote asking for an order. The Earl's answer was, that "he had tasted the wine sent, but—preferred the gout!"

some to be a strong excitant of gout—and to live on only white meat, such as rabbits, fowls, or game. But the gout was never banished until he had given up flesh meat altogether, and confined himself entirely to vegetable food. Upon this diet he did the hardest work of his life. He became proprietor and editor, in conjunction with Dr. Bowring, of the *Westminster Review;* he wrote articles, pamphlets, and the *Corn-Law Catechism;* he invented the Enharmonic organ; he entered Parliament, first as member for Hull, and afterwards as member for Bradford in Yorkshire; and during the rest of his life, he was one of the most active-minded of men.

During the last year of his life, when he was eighty-six, the author of this book, who had known him intimately in Yorkshire some twenty-five years before, wrote to General Thompson asking whether he had continued to hold to his abstinence from flesh food and alcoholic drink. His answer was: "I have *not* adhered to the abstinence from flesh, though I found it very useful and necessary in a tropical climate. But I *have* adhered strictly to the abstinence from anything alcoholic; and, therefore, inasmuch as the gout has been absent, I conclude it is to *this* that the absence of gouty symptoms is owing."

Here is a warning, with a moral. But as things go,—while men eat and drink too much, and at the same time work their brains too much, they will have dyspepsia, biliary disorder, gout, melancholy, with other diseases of the digestive organs, to which brain-workers are so generally subject. The ancient poets punished Prometheus for stealing fire from heaven, by setting a vulture to gnaw at his liver.

Generally speaking, the man who thinks least, digests best; and he who thinks most, usually digests worst. Healthy

labourers; dyspeptic philosophers! Viewed in this light, "it is a great comfort to have no intellect," as Jack Poyntz says in *School*. The hard-working man has the digestion of an ostrich, and scarcely knows where his stomach lies; while the brain-worker has to watch every mouthful that he eats, and is scarcely ever allowed to forget that he has a stomach. The difficulty of the former is in getting food enough to eat; that of the latter is in digesting what he has eaten. "Give me an alms," said the poor man to the rich; "I am hungry." —"Hungry?" said the other, "how I envy you!"

Though a German author has written a eulogy on ill-health, and a French professor, Fouquier, has described with much eloquence the advantages of a delicate constitution, as Franklin enlarged upon the blessings of gout, there can be no doubt that healthy digestion is requisite for healthy thinking. "There was a time in Germany," said Goethe, "when a man of genius was represented in the form of a little stunted creature, indeed almost humph-backed. For my part, I like to meet with genius in a body endowed with a more suitable constitution." The robust Goethe could not recognise any connection between scrofula or rickets, and intellect.[1]

The diseased action of the stomach reacts upon the brain, and affects the temper and intellect. Swift's indigestion was the main cause of his cynicism, and reacted upon his mind and character. Carlyle's life, too, was for the most part one long wail of bile, dyspepsia, and "girding." There are politicians so acrid that the only intelligible solution of their temperament is to be found in the state of their diges-

[1] Descartes says: "The mind depends so greatly on temperament and on the disposition of the bodily organs, that if it be possible to find a means of rendering men more generally wise and able than they now are, I believe it is in physiology that we must seek for it."

tion. "Tell me what you eat," said Brillat-Savarin, "and I will tell you what you are." A French physician used to say: "Tell me how a man digests, and I will tell you how he thinks." The ancient Greeks, though they led a city life, seem to have understood the conditions of physical health much better than we do. They had not so many books to read, they had no high-pressure examinations to pass, and they indulged much more in physical exercise. They described the jolly good-humoured man by the very expressive, but almost untranslatable word *Eucolos*[1]—a man of easy digestion. Sydney Smith once observed: "I am convinced digestion is the great secret of life; and that character, talents, virtues, and qualities, are powerfully affected by beef, mutton, pie-crust, and rich soups. I have often thought I could feed or starve men into virtues or vices, and affect them more powerfully with my instruments of torture than Timotheus could do formerly with his lyre."

Many are the torturing indigestions which brain-working

[1] From *eu* (good) and *kolon* (intestine), literally a person of good bowels, but also of good humour, kindly, and genial. The ancients accounted for a man's temper by the *humour* he was in. According to the humoral pathology, there were four humours,—the blood, the mucus or phlegm, the yellow bile, and the black bile. Hence the four temperaments, according as one or the other of the humours predominated,—the sanguine, the phlegmatic, the bilious or choleric, and the atrabilious or melancholic. This theory has long been exploded, yet it has given a colour to our language, and we still speak of persons as being in a peculiar humour, just as they did in the time of Hippocrates. Horace spoke of his liver swelling with bile when in a fit of jealousy (vae, meum fervens difficili bile tumet jecur). Shakespeare describes the coward as "lily-livered," and "lacking gall to make oppression bitter." We constantly use such terms as sanguine, splenetic, choleric, bilious, melancholic, galled, phlegmatic, and so on. We still speak of the heart as the seat of affection, of the liver as the seat of passion, and of the bowels as the seat of pity,—unconscious of the origin of the phrases, in the long-discarded humoral pathology, but which has now become part of our ordinary speech.

students endure before they reach the happy standard of moderation; and some, indeed, never do reach it. "Notwithstanding my moderation," said a scholar, "it has cost me four bilious fevers before I arrived at it." For that which is moderation in an out-of-doors' worker becomes excess in a scholar, a lawyer, an artist, or a business man at his desk, because their occupation is sedentary, and they work with their brains and stomachs and not with their muscles. It is true, some men are so constituted that they preserve their digestion unimpaired notwithstanding their sedentary pursuits. "West told me," said Haydon, "that he never knew what it was to have a head or a stomach: I should think so, from his colour and expression; [his works] were all by a man who had neither head, stomach, nor heart." A man may have both headache and stomach-ache without any product of brain-work. One must not expect, because he has headaches like Pope and Watt, that he can write poetry like the one or invent steam-engines like the other. When a stupid playwright complained to Douglas Jerrold of his ailments, and explained that they were caused by "fever of the brain," the wit replied, "Courage, my friend, there is no foundation for the fact!"

The seat of dyspepsia, hypochondria, and melancholy, is in the brain as much as in the stomach. When brain-work is carried to excess, the whole system becomes pervaded by nervous excitability; the heart is affected as well as the stomach, the very pulse becomes nervous, all the bodily functions are imperfectly performed, and the end often is that the brain itself becomes stricken by disease in its worst forms. Cabanis said: "The nerves are the man;" and Moreau, that "Genius is a disease of the nerves." At such risks are some of the greatest products of genius achieved.

The brain, as we have said, has been compared to an electrical machine, giving off nerve-force in currents or shocks, the exhausting effect of which—as in the gymnotus electricus—is in proportion to their intensity and duration. If the expenditure of the supposed electric shocks be not intermitted by rest and sleep the result will be nervous exhaustion and mental insolvency. What we call genius, for the most part depends upon the intensity of the nerve-force. It has been described as a sudden explosion of cerebral sensibility—as a nervous flash of brain-power. "Our genius," said a poet, "consists in excited sensibility." "Men are nothing," said Montaigne, "until they are excited." "Everything yields," said Avicenna, "to the human soul elevated to ecstasy." Molière said of Corneille: "The god suddenly comes to him and dictates his fine lines, and then as suddenly leaves him." "I hear too much, I see too much," said an artist, "and I feel all round me for a league."

Poets have spoken of their moments of inspiration, when their intellect is at a white heat, during which they threw off their thoughts in a state of "fine phrenzy." At such times, Dryden felt a trembling all over him; Alfieri experienced an obscurity of vision; Rousseau had an access of fever. "My organisation," said Beethoven, "is so nervous that the slightest circumstance changes my joy into pain." Captain Medwin says that almost all Byron's and Shelley's finest things were written under the effects of a temporary derangement. Byron said of poetry, it is "the expression of excited passion." Mrs. Shelley said of her husband: "Through life he was a martyr to ill-health; and constant pain wound up his nerves to a pitch of susceptibility that rendered his views of life different from those of a man in the enjoyment of healthy sensations. . . . He suffered a great deal of excitement; his fortitude to bear was almost

always on the stretch; and thus, during a short life, he had gone through more experience of sensation than many whose existence is protracted."

In the temple of the muses there are many human sacrifices. The intense poets live quick, and die quick.[1] At the same time it must be confessed that life is not merely to be measured by length of years, but by the sum of a man's sensations. The more he feels, the more he enjoys and the more he lives. What has a man felt, experienced, achieved? Thus some brilliant young men, who have died, worn out before forty, have really accomplished more than many octogenarians. As Wordsworth says:

> "The good die first,
> And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
> Burn to the socket."

Dean Swift even alleged that no great man could live to old age. When people talked to him of a fine old man, he said: "If his head or heart had been worth anything, he would have been worn out long ago." Only a certain

[1] Many of the poets have not lived to enjoy repose under the shade of the laurels they have planted. Chatterton poisoned himself at eighteen; Kirke White died at twenty-one; Robert Ferguson at twenty-four; Keats at twenty-five; Pollock at twenty-eight; Shelley at thirty (accidentally drowned); Charles Wolfe at thirty-two; Suckling (supposed to have poisoned himself) at thirty-four; Otway at thirty-four; Tannahill (who drowned himself) at thirty-seven; Burns, Byron, and Praed at thirty-seven; Edgar Allan Poe at thirty-eight; Savage and Schiller at forty-six; Thomson at forty-eight; Cowley at forty-nine; Tasso at fifty-one; Virgil, Molière, and Shakespeare at fifty-two; Gray, Camœns, and Alfieri at fifty-five; Dante and Pope at fifty-six; Ovid and Horace at fifty-seven; Ariosto and Racine at fifty-nine. On the other hand, poets of contemplative imagination have for the most part lived to a comparatively old age. Thus Milton lived to sixty-six; Chaucer to seventy-two; Klopstock to seventy-nine; Wordsworth to eighty; and Goethe to eighty-three. Tennyson and Browning are still with us.

amount of nervous fire can be got out of a man, as only so much flame and heat out of a given quantity of fuel. The quicker the combustion, the sooner is it reduced to dust and ashes. When the doctors were standing by the bedside of Van Orbeeck, the Dutch painter, and were founding some hopes upon his age the artist said: "Gentlemen, have no regard for my forty-six years; you must count them *double*, for I have lived day and night." He was, however, a man exhausted by work, pleasure, and excess. He was not therefore a normal, but an abnormal example. There have been other men of powerful intellect, who, with carefulness and attention to bodily exercise, have lived to old age; and grown the wiser the older they grew. The ancient writers designated such men "the elect of nature"; for they joined to an athletic frame an energetic nervous temperament, and were apt either for physical or mental toil. Thus the great Plato was famous alike for the breadth of his shoulders and the force of his imagination, for the strength of his body and the vigour of his intellect. In more recent times, Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Buffon, Gluck, Gustavus Adolphus, John Sobieski, Goethe, the Duke of Wellington, have exhibited the same intense power of "staying," together with nervous sensibility, both combined in the same person.

The evils of over-sensitiveness are exaggerated by the sedentary lives which most brain-workers lead. Their occupation, at the desk or writing-table, keeps them in a constrained position, which prevents the free play of their chest, and the inhalation of fresh air into the lungs.[1] Where they

[1] M. Reveillé-Parise is of opinion that some day medical men will insist on the proper exercise of the lungs as the best mode of maintaining health and prolonging life. "Je suis convaincu," he says, "que la veillesse commence et s'accroît par le poumon, que c'est dans cet organe

breath impure air, or work during the night, as is often the case, the effects are still more disastrous. The physical system ceases to be properly nourished. Air and light are as necessary for the nutrition of the body as food; for, while food is only required at intervals, air is necessary in every breath we draw. When the lungs are not properly inflated, the blood cannot be oxygenated. Sanguification is imperfect, and it follows that nutrition is imperfect. The action of the heart becomes languid; the blood is not propelled to the extremities of the system, but accumulates in the internal organs. Hence cold feet and skin; the *Pulchrum sublimum virorum florem*, as it was described by an early father, being nothing less than indigestion and nervousness, the result of over brain-work. The student becomes saturated with irritability, and is morbidly sensitive. His nerves are, so to speak, naked and exposed; and his extreme sensibility consumes the life that it ought to embellish.

The fragile constitution of brain-workers is greatly increased by the neglect of physical exercise. The artist, who painted the picture of the rosy-fingered Aurora opening the portals of the East, never saw the sun rise. Poets sing of the beauties of nature by gaslight, and in rooms into which the sun's light probably never enters. Tycho Brahe scarcely ever issued from his observatory for twenty-one years; and the sedentary life which he led was doubtless the cause

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essentiellement vasculaire et perméable, qui absorbe l'air, qui le digére en quelque sorte et l'assimile à notre substance, que se trouve le point de départ de dégradation de l'organisme; et s'il était possible d'entretenir *l'hématose* ou sanguification, dans son état de perfection, je ne doute pas qu'on ne trouvât ainsi le vrai moyen de prolonger la vie humaine. Les générations futures décideront cette question, s'il est jamais permis à l'homme d'en donner la solution."—*Physiologie et Hygiène des Hommes livrés aux travaux de l'esprit*, i. pp. 237, 238.

of the disease of which he died.[1] Another astronomer, the Abbe de la Caille, had a rest for his head invented, on which he spent his nights in watching the heavens. The celebrated Greek scholar, De Villoison, worked at his books fifteen hours a day. When La Harpe, who lived in one of the closest streets of old Paris, was asked what were his relaxations, he said that when he felt his head fatigued, he put it for a short time out of the window. That was his only exercise. These voluptuaries of science and learning suffer more than common men do. The wonder is, that nature should endure so much restraint, and still perform her functions so as to sustain life.

But the habit of working grows so much upon the brain-worker that he cannot restrain himself. When Petrarch complained of his health to the Bishop of Cavaillon, the latter at once understood the cause, and asked to have the keeping of the key of his study. Petrarch consented, but only for three days. Before that time had expired, the poet went to the bishop, and imploringly asked him: "Give me back the key of my study, or I shall die at your feet." We shall see, however, that those who thus violate the laws of nature, pay, whether by work or by worry, very heavy penalties in the long run.

The first penalty is loss of sound sleep. Brain-workers require more sleep than other people, and yet they often get less. When men work late, their exaltation of mind con-

[1] Civiale, in his treatise on *Calculous Affections*, gives a list of one hundred and forty-eight eminent philosophers, artists, and literary men who have been affected by these diseases, the result, for the most part, of their sedentary occupations. Amongst these men may be mentioned Bossuet, Buffon, Michael Angelo, Bacon, D'Alembert, Amyot, Calvin, Casaubon, Desaugiers, Erasmus, Montaigne, Luther, Linnæus, Harvey, Leibnitz, Newton, Garrick, Rousseau, Scarpa, Volney, Voltaire, Franklin, Sir Robert Walpole, Napoleon III., etc.

tinues long after they have retired to rest. The brain goes on working, to the banishment of sleep. Like a mill, it goes on grind, grinding, though without grist! Will has no power over it, and it dreams and thinks, uncontrolled and incoherently. The brain can only recuperate its power, and bodily waste can only be repaired, by perfect rest,—by sound sleep; but when there is no sleep, but only half wakeful dreams, the brain and body are alike unrested and unrefreshed.

What a blessing is sleep! It is one of the happiest boons of youth, and we never know its value until we have lost it. "Sleep wraps one all round like a blanket," says Sancho Panza. Sir Philip Sidney knew its value; these are his words :—

> "Come Sleep, O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,
> The baiting-place of art, the balm of woe,
> The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
> The indifferent judge between the high and low."

When youth passes, and age advances, and work, worry, and anxiety distress the mind, then sleep disappears. Thought will not be silenced, the body tosses to and fro, and the down pillow becomes like a knotted log. That is the dark epoch in many a brain-worker's life. "You get up," says Haydon, "with a black veil over your fancy, through which you see all things."

Lord Clarendon said of Chillingworth: "His only unhappiness proceeded from his sleeping too little and thinking too much." There are few literary men who are not more or less afflicted by sleeplessness. Business men, too, often take their cares to bed with them; they lie tossing about, turning over the events of the past day—their enterprises, speculations, profits, and losses. Their brain is not nourished by rest, for they cannot sleep.

Pope, while occupied on the *Iliad*, once wished himself hanged that he might get rid of Homer. He was beside himself with sleeplessness; and yet he worked at night. Lord Oxford's domestic related that, in the dreadful winter of '40, she was called from her bed by him four times in one night, to supply him with paper lest he should lose a thought.[1] Boerhaave, after one of his intense studies, did not close his eyes for six weeks. Goldoni, after writing sixteen plays in a year, paid the penalty for his folly during the rest of his life. Byron was troubled with sleeplessness, despondency, and "actual despair," during his composition of *Marino Faliero*. One night he "suffered horribly," and could only allay his distress by drinking an immense quantity of soda-water. John Hunter rarely slept more than four hours during the night, but he enjoyed an hour's sleep after dinner. The opinions of learned men have differed much as to the time required for sound sleep. Jeremy Taylor says that only three hours out of the twenty-four should be devoted to sleep; but this is far too short a period. Baxter fixes upon four hours, Wesley on six, and Lord Coke on seven. Sir Walter Scott required eight hours' sound sleep to keep his brain in full working order. Dr. Fowler, of Salisbury, a veteran well known in scientific circles, and to the last a frequenter of the British Association, said that one essential of long life was to "lie abed in the morning until you are *done enough*." He lived to ninety-eight.

When the sleep is sound, a smaller proportion will be sufficient to give rest and restore the powers of the brain. But when it is unsound, and spent chiefly in dreams and excitement, nature is not rested, and the brain and body remain unrefreshed. The excited mind continues to work

[1] Elwin, *Works of Pope*, vi. p. 23.

even in dreams. In such a state Sir Isaac Newton solved a difficult mathematical problem. Condorcet relates that having retired to bed, jaded with some intricate calculations which remained unfinished, he completed them in his dreams. Condillac, when writing his *Cours d'Étude*, found that a course of thought which he had broken off on retiring to rest, was continued and finished during the night. Sir Benjamin Brodie relates a case in which a friend actually completed an invention during his dreams, and another who solved mathematical problems which had baffled him when awake. Coleridge, after reading a passage in Purchas's *Pilgrimage*, composed his poetical fragment, *Kubla Khan*, during a dream. Tartini is said to have composed his *Devil's Sonata* from the inspiration of a dream, in which the devil challenged him to a trial of skill upon his violin.

Some philosophers are of opinion that dreams are continuous, and last through the night; others, that the dream only occurs during the moment that you are awaking from sleep. Lavalette, when a prisoner in the Bastille under sentence of death, mentions a circumstance relating to himself which seems to confirm the latter view. He heard the clock of the Palace of Justice strike twelve at midnight, when the gate opened to relieve the sentry. Then he fell asleep, when an extraordinary dream took place. He was standing in the Rue St. Honoré, when a low and uncertain sound arose, and he perceived at the bottom of the street, and advancing towards him, a troop of cavalry, all flayed, holding torches in their hands. Pale and dishevelled women appeared and disappeared alternately at the windows; low, inarticulate groans filled the air. The horrible troop continued passing in a rapid gallop, their march past continuing for *five hours*. They were followed by an immense number of artillery waggons full of bleeding corpses. Then

Lavalette suddenly awoke by the iron gate of the prison being shut with great force. He made his repeater strike. It was no more than midnight; so that the horrible phantasmagoria had lasted no more than *two or three minutes*,—that is to say, during the time necessary for relieving the sentry and shutting the gate. The next day the turnkey confirmed his calculation.[1]

We have heard of another case, where it was found necessary to have mustard poultices placed upon the soles of a patient's feet. During the smart of this little operation, the patient dreamt of his being taken prisoner by the Arabs and marched for long distances through the desert, during which he felt the smart sting of the burning sands. The torture seemed to him to last for years; and at length he was relieved, being awakened after three or four minutes by the mustard poultices being taken off his feet.[2]

Habit has a great influence upon sleep. Sailors and soldiers can sleep when they will, and awake when they will. The Emperor Napoleon could sleep when he chose. Captain Barclay, the great walker, fell asleep the instant he lay down. The celebrated General Elliot (known for his defence of Gibraltar), did not sleep more than four hours out of the twenty-four; but he was strikingly abstinent, and lived upon bread, water, and vegetables. Lord Brougham was able to sleep whenever he had an odd hour, half hour, or even a quarter of an hour to spare. It greatly increased his capacity for exertion.[3] Like Fénelon, Brougham found

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[1] Lavalette (Comte), *Mémoires et Souvenirs.*

[2] This circumstance was related by Dr. Fletcher in his lectures on Physiology at Edinburgh.

[3] It is related of Lord Brougham that he once worked—read, pleaded, etc.—for five days and nights consecutively; then rushed down to his country house, slept Saturday night, all Sunday and Sunday

rest and relief in change of work. "Le changement," said Fénelon, "des études est toujours un délassement pour moi."

Members of Parliament, from their late and irregular hours, have much need of snatches of sleep. Pitt could sleep when he chose; though, during Parliamentary debates, he had usually one ear open. While Lord North was virulently assailed by an antagonist, a member exclaimed, "The Premier is asleep!"—"Not so," said the first lord, languidly opening his eyes; "but I wish to heaven I were." Some men, like Brougham, possess the happy gift of sleep. They throw off at once their cares and anxieties, their studies, their professional occupations, their business speculations, just as they throw off their clothes, and sleep soundly and profoundly. Montaigne says of Scipio that he was a great sleeper, and that it was the only fault that men found in him. Montaigne said of himself: "Sleeping has taken up a great part of my life, and I yet continue at the age I now am (about fifty-five), to sleep eight or nine hours together."[1] Montaigne further relates of Alexander the Great, that he slept so profoundly on the morning of his great battle with Darius, that Parmenio was forced to enter his chamber and call him several times by his name.[2]

Mr. Croker has pleasantly maintained that it is impossible to be a great man without being a good sleeper,—his favourite examples being Napoleon, Pitt, and Wellington. These men possessed the gift of sleep, and could compose themselves to slumber almost at will; thus economising and increasing their capacity for work. Wellington's bio-

night, and was ready for business on Monday morning. Such superhuman feats are hardly within the grasp of men of the present generation.

[1] Montaigne's *Essays*: "Of Experience," book iii. chap. xiii.

[2] *Ibid.*: "Of Sleep," book i. chap. xliv.

grapher says of him: "Indeed he seemed to have the faculty of sleeping whenever he chose; and it was one unbroken slumber with him, when in health, from the time he laid his head on his pillow until he rose again. It is said of him that when one of his lady friends expressed surprise that he should continue to make use of a bed (his old camp-bed), on which there was no room to turn, his answer was: 'When one begins to turn in bed it is time to get up.'"[1]

Lord Palmerston also possessed the power of throwing off the cares of office, and falling sound asleep. Even in the House of Commons he had many a comfortable nap: indeed, he was spoken of there as "the great sleeper." It was thus that he was enabled lightly to bear the burdens of office to the very threshold of eighty-two years. James Watt fortunately possessed the power of sleeping at will. But for this, he would probably never have invented the condensing steam-engine. He sometimes slept from nine to eleven hours by night, besides taking occasional naps during the day; and though of an originally feeble constitution, he contrived to live to the age of eighty-three, preserving his power of invention to the last. "He vas a gut sleeper," said Washington Irving of the Dutchman in *Rip van Winkle*, and the words were engraved upon his tombstone. He who does not sleep is in a fair way of becoming insane. To keep a man perpetually awake was one of the tortures of the Inquisition, and it never failed of its effect.

How to ensure sleep has become a matter of speculation. Some think early rising is a sovereign remedy:—

> "Early to bed and early to rise,
> Is the way to be healthy, wealthy, and wise."

[1] Gleig, *Life of Wellington* (edition 1864), p. 427. See also *The Croker Papers*, edited by Jennings, ii. p. 312.

Some, however, adopt artificial methods. One tries to sleep by repeating the multiplication table; another repeats some bit of well-known poetry. A missionary troubled with sleeplessness repeated the Lord's Prayer till Satan sent him to sleep to get rid of it; and he says that he never found the receipt to fail. Another looks at an imaginary point, and follows it far off in the distance, thus inducing the hypnotism of Braid. Some, like Dr. Franklin, believe in the air bath, and others in the pillow of hops.[1]

The late Archbishop Whately was a hard brain-worker, and required a compensating amount of sleep. He knew

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[1] The following is the method of procuring sleep, according to Dr. Binns, in his *Anatomy of Sleep*. Dr. Binns says the discovery is due to Mr. Gardner:—

"*How to procure sleep.*—Let him turn on his right side; place his head comfortably on the pillow, so that it exactly occupies the angle a line drawn from the head to the shoulder would form; and then, slightly closing his lips, take rather a full inspiration, breathing as much as he possibly can through the nostrils. This, however, is not absolutely necessary, as some persons breathe always through their mouths during sleep, and rest as sound as those who do not. Having taken a full inspiration, the lungs are then to be left to their own action; that is, the respiration is neither to be accelerated nor retarded. The attention must now be fixed upon the action in which the patient is engaged. He must depict to himself that he sees the breath passing from his nostrils in a continuous stream: and the very instant that he brings his mind to conceive this apart from all other ideas, consciousness and memory depart, imagination slumbers, fancy becomes dormant, thought subdued; the sentient faculties lose their susceptibility; the vital or ganglionic system assumes the sovereignty; and, as we before remarked, he no longer wakes, but sleeps. This train of phenomena is but the effort of a moment. The instant the mind is brought to the contemplation of a single sensation, that instant the sensorium abdicates the throne, and the hypnotic faculty steeps it in oblivion."

Another method was that adopted by Dr. Southey. To James White he said: "Follow my practice of making your latest employment in the day something unconnected with its other pursuits, and you will be able to lay your head upon the pillow like a child."

very well that the brain weakens under continued and protracted labour, especially at night. Accordingly, he adopted a method of ensuring rest and sleep. One wintry day a medical friend accompanied Dr. Field to the archbishop's house at Redesdale, Stillorgan. The ground was covered with two feet of snow, and the thermometer was down almost to zero. As the couple of doctors passed, they saw an old labouring man felling a tree, while a heavy shower of sleet drifted pitilessly on his wrinkled face. One of them thought, what a cruel master that man must have. The other said: "That labourer, whom you think the victim of prelatical despotism, is no other than the archbishop curing himself of a headache. When his Grace has been reading and writing more than ordinarily, and finds any pain or confusion about the cerebral organisation, he puts both to flight by rushing out with an axe, and slashing away at some ponderous trunk. As soon as he finds himself in a profuse perspiration he gets into bed, wraps himself in Limerick blankets, falls into a sound slumber, and gets up buoyant."

But what shall be said of those who not only do not invite sleep, but, in their ardour for brain-work, take steps to prevent it. Some take coffee, others tea, ardent spirits, or opium. Mr. J. C. Loudon, while writing his *Encyclopædia of Cottage, Farm, and Villa Architecture*, took strong doses of coffee to keep himself awake. His wife joined him in his literary efforts. "The labour," says Mrs. Loudon, "that accompanied this work was immense; and for several months he and I used to sit up the greater part of every night, never having more than four hours' sleep, and drinking strong coffee to keep ourselves awake." Notwithstanding a severe attack of rheumatic fever, which led to anchylosis of his left knee, and severe injury to his right arm, with loss of the use of his hands and fingers, he went on dictating the

remainder of his works, and contrived to live to the age of sixty, when he was cut off by inflammation of the lungs.

Coffee has been a great favourite with brain-workers, because of its exhilarating effects upon the mind. Though persons of lymphatic temperament profit by its use, those of an anxious, nervous disposition suffer from it, especially when taken in excess. Coffee was Zimmerman's favourite beverage; but it brought him to a state of deplorable melancholy. "To keep myself awake," said Charles Pongeus, "I take up to ten cups of coffee a day, and I put a pinch of salt into the last to give it greater activity." But a stroke of blindness interrupted his studies, and soon terminated the test of how much his over-worked brain could accomplish.

Michelet rose at six in the morning, drank coffee, and began his work. He worked for six hours, drinking coffee at intervals. He says it sustained him. "No!" says Deschanel, "it ran away with him. We feel it in his style —full of flashes, but also of feverish jerks."[1] Michelet himself attributed the revolutionary spirit of the eighteenth century to the consumption of coffee, and the cloudy condition of the French mind in these later years to the increasing use of tobacco.

Claude Bordelieu, the celebrated young physician—who ought to have known better, though physicians are as reckless of their lives as other men—drank coffee in large quantities to keep him awake and enable him to pursue his studies; and then, sleeplessness being established, he took opium to send his brain to rest. But no constitution could stand such a strain, and the brilliant physician died at a comparatively early age.

[1] Emile Deschanel, *Physiologie des Écrivains et des Artistes*, p. 172.

Tea is another wakener-up; perhaps it is more stimulating to the brain than coffee. Dr. Johnson largely indulged in tea; sometimes drinking as many as twenty cups at a sitting,—though cups in those days were but small. Mrs. Piozzi relates that she sometimes sat and made tea for him until four o'clock in the morning. Although Johnson knew it not, his excessive tea-drinking was probably in a great measure the cause of his sleeplessness and nervous tremulousness.[1] At one time Johnson drank spirituous liquors, and then he drank deep. But, as he himself had the frankness to confess, he could abstain but he could not be moderate. When Hannah More pressed him one day, at Bishop Porteus's table, to take a little wine, he replied: "I cannot drink a *little*, child: therefore I never touch it. *Abstinence* is as easy to me as *temperance* would be difficult." Hence his indulgence in tea, and his defence of that popular beverage when so virulently attacked by Mr. Jonas Hanway.[2]

[1] "A kind of chronic narcotism, the very existence of which is usually ignored, but which is in truth well marked and easy to identify, is that occasioned by habitual excess in tea and coffee. There are many points of difference in the action of these two substances, taken in poisonous excess, but one common feature is very constant, viz. the production of muscular tremor. . . . The paralysing influence of narcotic doses of tea is further displayed by the production of a particularly obstinate kind of dyspepsia, while coffee disorders the action of the heart to a distressing degree. I believe that a very much larger amount of illness is caused by intemperate indulgence in these narcotics than is commonly supposed."—Dr. Anstie *On Stimulants and Narcotics*, pp. 249, 250.

[2] In his pamphlet, Johnson describes himself as "a hardened and shameless tea-drinker, who has for many years diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant: whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnights, and with tea welcomes the morning." This last phrase was thus parodied by Tyers: "*Te* veniente die—*te* decedente."—Croker's *Johnson*, 8vo edition, p. 105.

Hazlitt revelled in tea, which was his Hippocrene; though the beverage kept him in a state of constant nervous fever. He never touched any but black tea, and was very particular about its quality, always using the most expensive that could be got. He used, when living alone, to consume nearly a pound in a week. "A cup of Hazlitt's tea," says Mr. Patmore, "was a peculiar thing; I have never tasted anything like it. He always made it himself; half filling the teapot with tea, pouring the boiling water over it, and then almost immediately pouring it out, using with it a great quantity of sugar and cream. To judge from its occasional effect upon myself, I should say that the quantity Hazlitt drank of this tea produced ultimately a most injurious effect upon him; and in all probability hastened his death, which took place from disease of the digestive organs. But its immediate effect was agreeable, even to a degree of fascination; and not feeling any subsequent reaction from it, he persevered in its use to the last, notwithstanding two or three attacks similar to that which terminated his life." [1]

This, however, was an abuse of the pleasant beverage. Hazlitt might, in like manner, have abused beef, or even water. Before his excessive indulgence in tea, he had abused ardent spirits, which had probably as much to do with the disease of his stomach and liver as his abuse of tea. Haydon writes of Hazlitt in his *Autobiography*, on the 25th of June 1815, just after the battle of Waterloo: "As for Hazlitt, it is not to be believed how the destruction of Napoleon affected him. He seemed prostrated in mind and body; he walked about unwashed, unshaved, hardly sober by day, and always intoxicated by night, literally, without exaggeration, for weeks; until at length, wakening

[1] P. G. Patmore, *My Friends and Acquaintances*, ii. pp. 312, 313.

as it were from his stupor, he at once left off all stimulating liquors, and never touched them after."[1]

Many brain-workers, however, do not possess the moral courage to give up alcohol in favour of tea. There is usually excitability enough in the brain of the thinker to keep him awake without resorting to artificial methods. These only serve to exaggerate the wakefulness which ought rather to be guarded against than provoked by narcotic stimulants. Carried to excess, the use of alcohol in any of its forms produces moral as well as physical injury to the brain-worker. Yet bards have sung its praises in all ages, though the greatest poets have been independent of artificial inspiration. Milton said the true epic poet who shall sing of the gods and then descend among men, must drink water out of a wooden bowl. Wordsworth also avowed himself to be "a simple water-drinking bard," though it has been very different with the poets of his own and preceding generations.[2]

Hessius, a German poet, famous in the sixteenth century, thought that there could be no greater disgrace than to be vanquished in a drinking-bout; and Drummond said of Ben Jonson that "drink was the element in which he lived." "His rugged face," says Aubrey, "was knotted and

[1] Haydon's *Autobiography*, by T. Taylor, i. p. 279.

[2] "If in any manner we can stimulate this [the poetic] instinct, new passages are opened into nature, the mind flows into and through things hardest and highest, and the metamorphosis is possible. This is the reason why the bards love wine, mead, narcotics, coffee, tea, opium, the fumes of sandal-wood and tobacco, or whatever other species of animal exhilaration. . . . But never can any advantage be taken of nature by a trick. The spirit of the world, the great calm presence of the Creator, comes not forth to the sorceries of opium or of wine. The sublime vision comes to the pure and simple soul in a clean and chaste body. That which we owe to narcotics is not an inspiration, but some counterfeit excitement and fury."—Emerson, *Essays*: "The Poet."

seamed by jovial excesses acting on a scorbutic habit." After quaffing "seas of Canary" at the "Mermaid," he would reel home to bed, and after a profuse perspiration, rise again to his dramatic studies. It is even said that Shakespeare died shortly after a "merry bout" with Ben Jonson and Drayton at Stratford-on-Avon, where he "drank too hard"; though Charles Knight says that the tradition, though it still survives, is not much to be relied on. Yet Shakespeare, while in London, was a regular frequenter of the "Mermaid," with Beaumont and Fletcher, Carew, Donne, and Jonson; and temperance in drink was not one of the virtues of that age. Marlowe was killed in a drunken quarrel, in his thirtieth year. Greene, the dramatist, led as turbulent a life as Marlowe. According to his own account of himself, "gluttony with drunkenness was his only delight." After falling from one stage of degradation to another, he "died of a surfeit" while in such a state of poverty that he was unable to leave his bed for lack of clothes.

Cowley died of a fever caught through lying out in the fields all night; he had been dining with a friend, drank deep, and was unable to find his way home.[1] Lovelace, who sang in praise of wine, died, says Aubrey, in a cellar in Long Acre. Otway died in a public-house on Tower Hill,—some say of hunger, others of drink.[2] Boyce was run over by a hackney coach when drunk; and Savage, who, during the later part of his life, lived chiefly on drink, died in Bristol gaol. Among the other "five fathom deep" men of the time were Rochester, Congreve, Sheffield, Parnell, Churchill, Prior, and Shadwell. Andrew Marvell drank copiously of wine to exalt his muse. Shenstone says of Somerville, a brother poet, that "he drank himself

[1] Spence's *Anecdotes* (edition 1858), p. 10.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 162.

into pains of the body in order to get rid of pains of the mind."

Addison, when vexed by the Countess of Warwick, his wife, resorted to the tavern, and sought consolation in the bottle. There is a room in Holland House where Addison composed his later writings; a bottle of Canary stood on a table at one end of the room, and Addison's visits to it were so frequent, that before his paper was finished the bottle was emptied. Steele was a toper, and wrote many of his articles for *The Tatler* in the taverns which he frequented. Even the correct Pope is said to have hastened his death by drinking spirits and feeding on highly-seasoned dishes. When Goldsmith was arrested by his landlady for rent, he sent to Dr. Johnson to inform him of his great distress. The doctor sent him a guinea, and promised to come immediately, which he did. But Goldsmith had already changed the guinea, and "had a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him" when he arrived. Johnson put the cork into the bottle, and asked Goldsmith how he proposed to pay the rent? The latter answered that he had the MS. of a novel ready for the press. It was the *Vicar of Wakefield!* Johnson took it to a bookseller, and sold it for £60; the rent was paid, the sheriff's officer withdrew, and Goldsmith, after rating the landlady, insisted on her giving him a bowl of punch!

The excesses of the poet Burns are well known, and have been often used to point a moral. But he had many temptations, and fell before them, as stronger men have done. When he was remonstrated with by a lady, one of his intimate friends, for joining drinking companions, he answered: "Madam, they would not thank me for my company if I did not drink with them; so I must give them a slice of my constitution." Even the Rev. John

Logan, author of "The Cuckoo" and many hymns and paraphrases, sought relief from melancholy in the fatal solace of drink. On one occasion he so far forgot himself as to appear in the pulpit in a state of intoxication. He abandoned the church for the press, and ended his fitful career as a literary man about town.

Sir Walter Scott was a man of sober habits. But for that he could not have accomplished so large an amount of brain-work. His only indulgence in alcohol was an occasional tumbler of whisky-toddy, which he preferred to the most precious "liquid ruby" that ever flowed from the cup of a prince. He reduced his quantity as he grew older, and smoked a cigar or two instead. He took care to warn his son against strong drink. "Even drinking what is called a certain quantity every day," he said, "hurts the stomach; and, by hereditary descent, yours is delicate."

Byron was intemperate only by fits and starts. At times he would almost starve himself, and smoked and chewed tobacco to prevent corpulency, of which he had a horror; but at other times he would drink to excess. Much of his poetry is said to have been composed under the influence of gin. Wine and laudanum made him savage, suspicious, and quarrelsome. "The thing that gives me the highest spirits," he said, "is a dose of salts. But one can't take *them* like champagne."[1] There seems to have been a dash of insanity in Byron throughout his life, as exhibited in his moodiness, melancholy, and misanthropy. He himself often feared that he should fall a victim to his morbidity, and, like Swift, "die at the top." Haydon takes another view of his character. "I am convinced," he said, "that

[1] Moore, *Life of Byron*, 8vo edition, p. 536. For the same reason, Dryden, before sitting down to study and composition, always took physic, and observed a careful regimen in respect of drink and diet.

Byron's excesses were not from love of vice, but experiments for a new sensation on which to speculate. After debauchery, he hurried away in his gondola, and spent the night on the waters. On board a Greek ship, when touching a yataghan, he was overheard to say: 'I should like to know the feeling of a murderer.'"

Keats took refuge from the malicious criticism with which his *Endymion* was received, in the delirium of drink; but it was followed by despondency, amounting almost to despair. Haydon, who knew him intimately, says that: "For six weeks he was scarcely sober; and to show what a man will do to gratify his appetites when they get the better of him, he once covered his tongue and throat as far as he could reach with cayenne pepper, in order to appreciate 'the delicious coldness of claret in all its glory,' to use his own expression."[1]

There were two things that the amiable Charles Lamb could not pass—in the city, an exhibition of Punch and Judy, and, in the country, a public-house. During the long walks which he took about Hampstead and Highgate, he had always before him the prospect of some wayside inn. "Now we have walked a pint," he would say.[2] On one occasion Professor Wilson accompanied him in a ramble, when suddenly Lamb disappeared. Wilson turned and followed him into a tap, when he overheard the order of "a pint of porter." "Make it a pot," said Wilson over Lamb's shoulder; and a grateful look was the reply. But towards

[1] Haydon's *Autobiography* (by T. Taylor), ii. p. 9. In one of Keats's letters the following passage occurs: "Talking of pleasure, this moment I am writing with one hand, and with the other holding to my mouth a nectarine. Good God, how fine! It went down soft, pulpy, slushy, oozy—all its delicious *embonpoint* melted down my throat like a large beautified strawberry."—Lord Houghton, *Life and Letters of Keats*, (edition 1867), p. 260.

[2] P. G. Patmore, *My Friends and Acquaintances*, i. p. 52.

the end of Lamb's life, Mr. Proctor says that the pipe was the only thing in which he really exceeded. Lamb attempted to give it up, and wrote his "Farewell to Tobacco"; but tobacco, he said, stood in its own light, and he returned to his "idol," which, like Robert Hall, the Congregational minister, he continued "to burn."[1] Cowper, the poet, was on intimate terms with the Rev. Wm. Bull, the dissenting minister at Olney. He described the reverend gentleman as "a man of letters and of genius, who can be lively without levity, and pensive without dejection. But," he added, "he smokes tobacco—nothing is perfect! 'Nihil est ab omni parte beatum.'"

De Quincey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge indulged largely in opium. De Quincey left behind him in his *Confessions of an Opium Eater*, perhaps the most vivid picture ever painted of the delirious joys and agonising horrors of the abuse of opium. Coleridge first resorted to opium as a

[1] The Rev. Robert Hall learnt to smoke in the company of Dr. Parr, who was a profound scholar as well as smoker. A friend one day found the preacher blowing an immense cloud of smoke, and, looking surprised, Hall said: "O, I am only qualifying myself for the society of a Doctor of Divinity, and this (holding up his pipe) is my test of admission." A member of his congregation expostulated with him as to the injuriousness of the habit, and left with him a copy of Dr. Adam Clarke's pamphlet *On the Use and Abuse of Tobacco*, with the request that he would read it. In a few days Mr. Hall returned it with the remark: "Thank you, sir, for Adam Clarke's pamphlet: I can't refute his arguments, and I can't give up smoking." He was more vehement in his denunciation of brandy. A minister of his own denomination, too much addicted to its use, said to him one day: "Friend Hall, I will thank you for a glass of brandy-and-water."—"Call it by its right name," was the reply; "ask for a glass of liquid fire and distilled damnation, and you shall have a gallon." The man turned pale, and seemed for a time struggling with anger. At last he stretched out his hand and said, "Brother Hall, I thank you from the bottom of my heart." From that time he ceased to take brandy-and-water.—*Olinthus Gregory's Memoir.*

relief from pain ; the needed relief was found, and Coleridge resorted to opium again. The desire for it grew ; the use of the drug became a habit ; with every dose, the will to resist it diminished, until at length the indulgence in opium became an imperious necessity.[1] It reached an excess that has seldom been equalled : it prostrated his powers ; broke up his family ; and for the greater part of fourteen years left him a miserable wreck. His mind became distempered and unsteady ; his memory lost continuity ; and his will became paralysed. In his lucid moments, he was overwhelmed with a sense of self-degradation ; but having lost all self-control and decision of character, he continued fast in the chains in which he had bound himself. Fortunately, by dint of great efforts, he was enabled at length to break his bonds, and to spend his remaining years in comparative honour and usefulness, though full of weakness and suffering.

Unhappily, however, the indulged desire for narcotics does not die with the victim, but descends like an inheritance of poison in the blood and brains of the unborn. Coleridge's son Hartley, though endowed with remarkable gifts, was cursed by an appetite for drink which blasted his whole life. He was spiritual yet sensual : he lived in dreams and was swayed by impulse ; he was unable to control his desires, and his life became a wreck. He "sang like a cherub, and drank like a fish." He lost his Oriel Fellowship through intemperance. He took to letters, but his disease pursued him. While at Leeds, writing the *Yorkshire Worthies*, he disappeared for days and weeks together ; the printer's boys

[1] Saint Augustine thus explains the progress of unhallowed desire in the human heart, which is applicable to indulgence in strong drink, opium, and narcotics generally : "Ex voluntate pervisa, facta est *libido ;* et dum servitur libidine, facta est *consuetudo ;* et dum consuetudini non resistatur, facta est *necessitas.*"—*Confess.*, lib. 8, c. p. 5.

were sent in search of him, and usually found him in an obscure beershop. He went to the Lakes and was no better. One of his best friends, ceased to call upon him: "It was so ridiculous and pitiable," he said, "to find the poor, harmless creature, amid the finest scenery in the world, and in beautiful summer weather, dead-drunk at ten o'clock in the morning." It was the same to the end. And yet Hartley was a most affectionate and lovable creature. That he was fully aware of the wrongness of his course, is evident from his numerous melancholy plaints in stanzas and sonnets; but his will was paralysed. He "knew the right and yet the wrong pursued"; he met temptation more than half-way, and laid himself down, a perfectly willing victim, at its feet.

Edgar Allan Poe, that vivid and wayward genius, was another victim to self-indulgence. It may possibly have resulted, to some extent, from his unhappy origin, and his untoward bringing up. The poison may, as in the case of Hartley Coleridge, have been bred in his blood and brain; and entitles him to our pity and commiseration, rather than to his utter condemnation. We can never trace the proximate, still less the ultimate causes, which lead to a man's break-down in life. We sees his follies, but know not their predestined beginnings. We witness his errors, but have no idea what his inherent weaknesses and temptations have been. To use Burns's words:—

> "What's done we partly may compute,
> But know not what's resisted."

Many literary men, who work for bread, for money, or for reputation, have had at one time or another, a touch of the students disease, the *Morbus Eruditorum*. This is quite independent of their indulgence in narcotics. It is simply the result of over-excitement of the brain; for, the more

delicate the instrument, the more liable it is to be thrown out of tune. Even physicians, who know the results of over brain-work, are sometimes found as reckless of their health as those who write for daily bread. Haller, for instance, was an excessive brain-worker. He lived in his library; took his meals there; slept there; and sometimes passed months without leaving it. Bichat also cut short his life by his excessive application to study. His constitution was so undermined by it, that an accidental fall on his head so shook his frame that he never rallied, but died at the early age of thirty-one.

The late Dr. Todd, the physiologist, cut short his life by his devotion to learning and science. He was accustomed to rise at six. After two or three hours of mental work, he swallowed his breakfast, and went out to visit his patients, which occupied him the greater part of the day. At a late hour, with his physical powers exhausted, he dined, after which he set to work upon his *Cyclopædia of Anatomy and Physiology* or his *Physiological Anatomy and Physiology of Man*, both of which were published at the same time. Of course no human constitution could stand such a strain of body and mind. His brain was overworked, his body was unexercised, and his stomach was loaded with food which it could not digest; and thus this brilliant and useful physician passed away at the age of fifty.

Brain workers, of all others, require the most repose; and every attempt to stimulate the thinking organ into abnormal activity, should above all things be avoided. Sleep deserted poor Goldsmith towards the end of his career, and at last he slept "the sleep that knows no waking" in his forty-fifth year. His biographer says of him: "Sleep had deserted him; his appetite was gone, and in the state of weakness, to which he had been reduced, that want of sleep

might in itself be fatal. It then occurred to Dr. Turton to put a very pregnant question to his patient. "Your pulse," said he, "is in a greater disorder than it should be, from the degree of fever which you have: Is your mind at ease?" —"No, it is not," was Goldsmith's melancholy answer.[1] These were his last words.

Sleeplessness, as we have said, is one of the penalties of over brain-work, and it is usually accompanied by depression of spirits, which often ends in profound melancholy. Sir Isaac Newton, in a letter to Locke, described himself as "not having slept an hour a night for a fortnight together, and for five days together not a wink." This was caused partly by his prolonged study, and partly by the distress occasioned by the destruction of his laboratory and MSS. by fire. The consequence was a temporary aberration of intellect, from which he recovered after a few months' rest. Pinel, however, held that the study of the exact sciences acted as a preservative of the mind against derangement—always subject, of course, to the study being pursued with regularity and in moderation. The balance of the mind is liable to be deranged by excessive and prolonged study—literally by abuse of the prerogative of thinking; for a debauch of the mind is as unjustifiable and injurious as a debauch of the body.

The want of natural rest leads, in some constitutions, to hypochondria and melancholy. The feelings and thoughts become morbid, and all nature seems wrapped in gloom. Chaucer, in his *Dream*, of which Blanche, Duchess of Gloucester, was the subject, described himself as the victim of nervous melancholy, arising from the habitual want of sleep, accompanied with the dread of death. Blaise Pascal, author of the *Pensées*, characterised by Bayle as "one of the

[1] Forster, *Life of Goldsmith* (edition 1863), p. 461.

sublimest spirits in the world," so injured his brain by excessive study that he became the victim of intense melancholy. He fancied that he saw a burning abyss close by his side, into which he was in constant danger of falling. He died of organic disease of the brain, as was clearly demonstrated by an autopsy, at the early age of thirty-nine.

Even wits and humorists have suffered from melancholy. Men who have set theatres and circuses in a roar have been the subjects of profound depression of spirits. The humorist Hoffman held that evil was always concealed behind apparent good, and that the devil had a whisk of his tail in everything. One day, a poor broken-down dyspeptic consulted Abernethy. The doctor looked at his tongue, felt his pulse, and inquired after his symptoms. "Well," said the frank Abernethy, "I don't think there is much the matter with you. You want stirring up: you want cheerfulness. Go and see that clever fellow Grimaldi; you will get a good hearty laugh; that will do you more good than physic."—"Alas!" said the patient, "*I am Grimaldi!*"

Molière, the dramatist and humorist, was the victim of hypochondria; as were Tasso, Johnson, Swift, Byron, Beethoven, and others. No wonder that Johnson was melancholy. He himself said that he could not remember the day that he had passed free from pain. Swift quitted Pope's house in disgust, after a few days' melancholy intercourse. Tasso supposed himself to be surrounded by fiery darts, unearthly noises, hissings, tinklings, and ringing of bells. What crowns of thorns surround the heads of the kings of intellect!

Benvenuto Cellini, Cardan, Blake, Rousseau, Goethe, Swedenborg, Shelley, and Napoleon were subject to strange hallucinations. Even Galileo was subject to attacks of hypochondria, occasioned in great measure by his sleepless nights,

which he nevertheless spent in astronomical observations. "I cannot," he said, "keep my restless brain from grinding on." Yet he lived to the age of seventy-eight. Napoleon's plan for getting rid of his hallucinations was a good one; he made up for excessive labour by excessive repose.

Smollett was subject to sleeplessness and dyspepsia. He went abroad for change of air and scene. He suffered alike in body and mind. Wherever he went he saw only himself. He was disappointed with everything; all was barren. He saw no beauty in the Venus de Medicis at Florence, while the Pantheon at Rome only reminded him of "a huge cock-pit open at the top." He returned to England and published his travels. Their appearance drew upon him Sterne's sarcastic notice in the *Sentimental Journey*. "The learned Smellfungus," he said, "travelled from Boulogne to Paris, from Paris to Rome, and so on; but he set out with the spleen and jaundice, and every object he passed by was discoloured and distorted. He thought he wrote an account of them; but it was nothing but an account of his miserable feelings. . . . He had been flayed alive, and bedevilled, and worse used than Saint Bartholomew at every stage he had come at. 'I'll tell it,' said Smellfungus, 'to the world.'—'You had better tell it,' said I, 'to your physician.'"

The poet Cowper suffered from the profoundest melancholy. This, as we have seen, was caused by the want of digestion. "I have a stomach," he said, "that quarrels with everything, and not seldom with its bread and butter." Sir James Mackintosh said of his case: "If Cowper had attended to Bacon's admonition that 'torpid minds cannot engage too soon in active life, but that sensibility should stand back until it has passed the meridian of its years,' instead of being one of the most wretched, he would have

been one of the happiest of men." It is a remarkable circumstance, that it was in one of the intervals between his fits of profound melancholy that Cowper composed that masterpiece of humour, *The Diverting History of John Gilpin*. The mirth seemed to be the rebound of his sadness. He himself said of this work: "Strange as it may seem, the most ludicrous lines I ever wrote have been written in the saddest mood, and but for that saddest mood, perhaps, had never been written at all."

So true it is, to use the words of Thomas Hood—also a sleepless man, whose wit was sharpened on the grindstone of pain—that—

> "There's not a string attuned to mirth,
> But has its chord of melancholy."

Or, in the words of Keats:—

> "Aye, in the very temple of Delight
> Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine."

When Cowper's *John Gilpin* was published—and it first appeared anonymously—Henderson the actor went up and down England, setting large rooms of people in a roar, at that wonderful production of the most melancholy of men; and amongst his audiences was to be seen the great Mrs. Siddons herself, who shook her sublime sides and clapped her majestic hands in ecstasy at the exhibition.

John Leech, the artist, to whom we owe so much enjoyment from his humorous drawings in *Punch*, was a great sufferer from want of sleep. "Nature," says Lord Bacon, "is best conquered by obeying her;" but Leech did not obey nature. It is true he occasionally hunted, but his ordinary life consisted in work. He worked on when the warning voice of his physician told him that his constitution required rest. He suffered from excessive nervous sensibility, so

that the slightest noise became torment to him. We all remember the angry caricatures which he launched at the organ-grinders in *Punch*, as we also remember the furious letters of Dr. Babbage in the *Times* at the same tormentors. Artist and author were alike tortured by barrel-organs, whether out of tune (as they generally are) or not. Few people know the agony which these tormenting instruments cause to men whose brains are working beyond their proper pitch. Heart disease, arising from nervous excitability, attacked poor Leech. Still he worked on; for the income he derived from his labours depended mainly upon his weekly exertions. He never took rest, but died working. His last drawing in *Punch* appeared on the day of his funeral."[1]

The poets Keats and Shelley suffered from the literary disease. While Keats was writing *Endymion*, he said to a friend: "I went day by day at my poem for a month, at the end of which time, the other day, I found my brain so overwrought that I had neither rhyme nor reason in it, so I was obliged to give up for a few days. . . . Instead of poetry I have a swimming in my head, and feel all the effects of a mental debauch, lowness of spirits, and anxiety to go on, without the power to do so.[2] Shelley was also subject to extreme morbid sensitiveness, aggravated by excessive tea-drinking, while composing his *Prometheus Unbound*. Writing to a friend he said: "My feelings at intervals are of a deadly and torpid kind, or awakened to such a state of unnatural and keen excitement that, only to

[1] Though Leech died at fifty-seven of *Angina Pectoris*, the root of his malady was probably in the brain, as in the cases of John Hunter, Sir Charles Bell, Dr. Arnold, Dr. Croly, Douglas Jerrold, Lord Macaulay, and the Rev. F. Robertson, who died of the same disease.

[2] Lord Houghton, *Life of Keats* (edition 1867), p. 44.

instance the organ of sight, I find the blades of grass and the boughs of distant trees present themselves to me with microscopic distinctness. Towards evening I sink into a state of lethargy and inanimation, and often remain for hours on the sofa between sleep and waking, a prey to the most painful irritability of thought."[1]

Fernel, the French physician, said: "A capite fluit omne malum." Great works are for the most part the issue of a determination of blood to the head. Metastasio occasionally felt a rushing of blood to his head when he set himself down to write. "I grow as red in the face as a drunkard," he said, "and am obliged to quit my work." When the brain is in this high state of tension, the slightest extra strain may produce the most serious results. Malebranche was seized with a violent palpitation on first reading Descartes work on *Man*. The poet Santeuil was so overjoyed at finding a phrase of which he had long been in search, that his reason was at once upset. Shenstone wrote to a friend: "I suppose you have been informed that my fever is in a great measure hypochondriacal, and left my nerves so extremely sensible that even on no very interesting subjects I could readily think myself into a vertigo—I had almost said an apoplexy; for surely I was oftentimes near it." Swift was for the greater part of his life subject to the literary disease, resulting in giddiness, vertigo, buzzing in the ears, tremblings in the limbs, and achings in the head, always accompanied by indigestion. Swift fully described his symptoms in his letters and journals, and Dr. Wilde speaks of his case as "one of the best described, and certainly the very longest instance of cerebral disease which he

[1] Mrs. Shelley's "Note on Prometheus Unbound," *Poetical Works of Shelley*, 8vo. (edition 1839), p. 125.

had ever met with, extending as it did over a period of fifty-one years."[1]

Thomas Hood was subject to his severest attacks of illness immediately preceding the publication of one of his works. Thus doubt, anxiety, and pain darken the brightest hours of genius. "The pitcher," it is said, "goes often to the well, but it is broken at last." Dr. Elliott, Hood's attendant, in describing his case to Mrs. Hood, said: "His diseases have been greatly aggravated of late years by the nature of his pursuits—by the necessity which, I understand, has existed, that he should at all times continue his literary labours, being under engagements to complete certain works within a stated period. The great and continued excitement attendant on such compulsory efforts, the privation of sleep and rest thereby entailed on him, and the consequent anxiety, depression, and exhaustion, have had a most injurious effect on these diseases, bringing on renewed attacks, and reducing him to such a state that he has been rendered utterly incapable of mental effort. The conviction that literary effort is necessary and urgent renders the effort fruitless. You must have remarked how generally these dangerous attacks have commenced at a period preceding the publication of his books; you have seen him break down under the struggle, and reduced to the brink of the grave by repeated attacks of hæmorrhage from the lungs, attended by palpitation of the heart."

Beattie, author of the *Essay on Truth*, said he never dared to read the work after it had been printed. One of his friends read and corrected the proofs. "These studies," said Beattie, "came in time to have dreadful effects upon my nervous system, and I cannot read what

[1] W. R. Wilde, F.R.C.S., *The Closing Years of Dean Swift's Life* (edition 1849), p. 5.

I then wrote without some degree of pain, because it recalls to my mind the horror that I have sometimes felt after passing a long evening in those severe studies." But, without citing innumerable other cases,[1] it may be sufficient to mention the case of Sir Walter Scott, who, towards the end of his life, was the victim of *Morbus Eruditorum.*

Scott was naturally of a healthy constitution. Though lame, and of sedentary pursuits through his occupation as a barrister, he fortified his health by many suburban walks round Edinburgh and occasional excursions into the Highlands. His first poetical efforts were sources of pleasure rather than of profit. It was not until the publication of *Waverley*, in his forty-third year, that he devoted himself more especially to literature. Had he confined himself to literature, he would probably have survived to an advanced age, and certainly lived a much happier life. But he unfortunately became a partner in the printing-house of Ballantyne and Company, Edinburgh, which led him into all manner of difficulties.

The success of *Waverley* was such that he proceeded to turn out his novels with wonderful rapidity. *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, and *Tales of my Landlord*, appeared in rapid succession; until, in his forty-sixth year, he was suddenly pulled up by a severe attack of cramp in the stomach. The disease yielded to severe treatment—bleeding, blisters, and opium—but he remained excessively weak. He could neither "stir for weakness and giddiness, nor read for dazzling in his eyes, nor listen for a whizzing sound in

[1] Mr. Isaac Disraeli has mentioned many cases in his Literary Character, under the heading of "The Enthusiasm of Genius," "The Rapture of Deep Study," "Illusions of the Mind of Genius," etc., in his *Miscellanies of Literature.*

his ears, nor even think for the lack of power of arranging his ideas."

So soon as he was able, he proceeded with *Rob Roy*, which he wrote under constant pain. The building of Abbotsford had been begun, and money must needs be raised. *The Heart of Midlothian* was written, and he was proceeding with *The Bride of Lammermoor*, when he was again interrupted with the recurrence of cramp in the stomach, which culminated in an attack of jaundice. Nevertheless, he finished *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and wrote nearly the whole of that novel—one of the finest of his works—as well as *The Legend of Montrose* and *Ivanhoe*, under the influence of opium and hyoscyamus—a most depressing drug. He continued to turn out about twelve volumes yearly; but no human constitution could stand such an amount of brain-pressure. When Dr. Abercromby expostulated with him as to his enormous amount of brain-work, and said: "Really, Sir Walter, you must not work," Scott's answer was—"I tell you what it is, doctor; Molly, when she puts the kettle on, might just as well say, kettle, kettle, don't boil!"

Yet Scott continued as hopeful and cheerful as ever; though the end was coming, and he was the first to feel it. At the age of fifty-four, he wrote in his *Diary*, as if in anticipation of an early break-up: "Square the odds, and good-night, Sir Walter, about sixty. I care not, if I leave my name unstained, and my family properly settled. *Sat est vixisse.*" A little later, he owned to a touch of the literary disease, though it had long been giving its warnings. He thus described it: "A touch of the *Morbus Eruditorum*, to which I am as little subject as most folks, and have it less now than when younger. It is a tremor of the head, the pulsation of which becomes painfully sensible—a disposition

to causeless alarm—much lassitude—and decay of vigour and activity of intellect. The veins feel weary and painful, and the mind is apt to receive and encourage gloomy apprehensions. Fighting with this fiend is not the best way to conquer him. I have found exercise and the open air better than reasoning."

Three weeks later, Scott made the following entry in his *Diary*: "Much alarmed. I had walked till twelve with Skene and Russell, and then sat down to my work [*Woodstock*]. To my horror and surprise, I could neither write nor spell, but put down one word for another, and wrote nonsense. I was much overpowered at the same time, and could not conceive the reason; . . . obliged to give up writing to-day; read Pepys instead." Scott was not satisfied with writing his *Woodstock*, but must write an article on Pepys's *Diary* for the *Quarterly*. And thus he went on, writing and correcting. Constable and Ballantyne failed; their bills were of no more use than so much waste paper; and Scott endeavoured to recover and pay off his debts, by writing the *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*.

Neither liver complaint, nor heart-flutterings, nor sleeplessness, nor hysteria, nor depression of spirits could stop him. "I know not," he said, "if my imagination has flagged—probably it has; but at least my powers of labour have not diminished during the last melancholy week. . . . These battles have been the death of many a man—I think they will be mine. Well, but it clears to windward; so we will fag on. . . . I am sensible that if I were in solitary confinement, without either the power of taking exercise or employing myself in study, six months would make me a madman or an idiot."

At length Scott tried travelling; but it did him no good; his brain still went on grinding. In his fifty-ninth

year, he had his first paralytic seizure; but the warning was unavailing; and no sooner had he recovered than he went on with his *Letters on Demonology* and his *Tales of a Grandfather*. His physicians earnestly advised that he should cease working his brain; but the warning proved of no use. In the following year, he had his second attack of paralysis, which was more severe than the first; yet he had scarcely recovered from it, than he proceeded with his *Count Robert of Paris*—only to exhibit the last painful flickerings of an expiring genius. After the Roxburghshire election, when he was mobbed and hooted at Jedburgh because he was "a Tory," he had his third attack of paralysis;[1] yet, immediately on recovering his speech, his cry was "to work." "I must home to work," he said, "while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work. I put that text many a year ago on my dial-stone, but it often preached to me in vain." From this time his mind gradually decayed: he was taken abroad, almost helpless. At Naples, "the ruling passion strong in Death," he actually began a new novel, but it was never published. On his way home another attack prostrated him, yet he retained strength enough to enable him to reach home and die.

His son-in-law, Lockhart, died of the same disease, and from the same cause—over brain-work. While editing the *Quarterly Review* he undertook to prepare the *Life of Sir Walter Scott*—one of the finest biographies ever written. But the labour was too great for him. He contrived, how-

[1] Napoleon, having a great fear of paralysis, asked his physician Corvisart his opinion of the disease. "Sire," replied Corvisart, "paralysis is always dangerous, but it gives warning. It rarely strikes its victim without notice. The first attack, almost always slight, is (to use a legal phrase) a *summons without costs;* the second is a *summons with costs;* and the third is *an arrest* (*prise de corps*). The death of Corvisart verified the truth of his own description.

ever, to finish the *Life* in seven volumes: it was a matter of honour and affection for him, and nothing more; for he derived no pecuniary advantage from the work. Then he gave up the editorship of the *Quarterly*, and went to Italy. He returned from Rome to Abbotsford, and died in a small room adjoining that in which Sir Walter Scott had breathed his last.

Southey was another victim of brain disease. He was one of the most industrious and continuous of literary labourers. As a reviewer of his life has said: "No artisan in his workshop, no peasant in the field, no handicraftsman at his bench, ever went so young to his apprenticeship, or wrought so unremittingly through life for a bare livelihood, as Robert Southey." As in the case of Scott, work became his habit; he could not refrain from it. Dr. Arnold observed of him, that he even worked as he walked,—for exercise it could not be called; he was then reading and annotating. He derived little advantage from his poetry and histories; he maintained himself principally by his contributions to the *Quarterly*. By the age of sixty, he was already an old man. His memory began to fail; melancholy had him for her own; he sank into second childhood; his mind became quite a blank; and he died of mental alienation at sixty-nine.

John Galt was at the same time a remarkable instance of *Morbus Eruditorum* and of extraordinary tenacity of life. He was one of the most industrious writers, in history, political economy, and fiction. He first broke down while editing the *Courier*; a stroke of paralysis having for a time interrupted his labours. He recovered, and went again to his newspaper work. His enemy returned again and again; he continued to write as long as he could hold his pen, and long after he had lost the use of every limb of his body, he

went on dictating to an amanuensis. Corvisart's remark to Napoleon, as to the third attack of paralysis being a *prise de corps*, did not apply to Galt; for it was not until he had suffered his fourteenth stroke of paralysis that he sank under its attacks in his sixtieth year.

The poet Heine was suddenly arrested in his labours by nervous disease; yet it took eight years to kill him, during which time he lost the use of his limbs, and became wasted to the proportions of a child. Yet he preserved his gaiety through all his sufferings, and went on composing to the end. While the Paris Exhibition of 1855 was afoot, a friend asked him about the state of his health, to which he replied: "My nerves are in such a remarkable condition, that I am convinced they would get the grand medal for pain and misery, if I could but show them at the Exhibition." He read all the medical books which treated of his complaint; "But what good this reading will do me," he said, "I don't know, except that it will qualify me to give lectures in heaven on the ignorance of doctors on earth about diseases of the spinal marrow."

The case of the Rev. F. Robertson of Brighton was an excessively painful one, especially towards the close of his career. He was nervous in temperament, and exceedingly sensitive; he studied and preached by turns; not writing his sermons, but trusting to the excitement of the moment for the words in which to clothe his ideas, and often for the ideas themselves. The result was intense brain excitement after every extempore sermon; sleeplessness, pain in the head, "as if an eagle were rending it with his talons,"[1] and consequent loss of memory, and confusion of thought. He longed for rest, yet worked on. Occasionally he had qualms

[1] The Rev. S. A. Brooke, *Robertson's Life and Letters*, (edition 1865), ii. p. 161.

as to the wisdom of the course he was pursuing: "I am becoming of opinion," he said, "that no duty whatever has a right to interfere with a human existence." But the calls upon him were great, and he yielded to them. He not only preached but lectured. After his lecture on Wordsworth at the Brighton Athenæum, he wrote to a friend: "The room was a perfect cram, and hundreds went away; but I have been suffering from severe pains in the head ever since—shooting thrills so sharp and sudden that I can scarcely forbear an exclamation." A few days after, he fainted in the street and was carried into a druggist's shop; but he had no sooner recovered than he went to fulfil an engagement! The pains in the head continued: "Every thought I think," he said, "and every line I write or read causing pain, sometimes acute and sometimes dull, of brain."

Robertson then went to consult the London doctors. They prescribed many medicines; but after taking them he felt no better. He next consulted a homœopathist, who recommended microscopic doses of aconite. A fourth, the wisest of all, refused to prescribe anything save entire and total cessation from the pulpit for life.[1] But the advice was rejected, and Robertson continued working on as sedulously as ever. His condition gradually grew worse. One of the members of his congregation undertook to prescribe for him; and, thinking that galvanism would do him good, sent an electric shock through his brain! "Instantly," he says, "a crashing pain shot through as if my skull was stove in, and a bolt of fire were burning through and through." He was for some time wild with pain;

[1] The same advice was given to the late Dr. Guthrie of Edinburgh, under somewhat similar circumstances; and the advice was followed. Hence his useful life was prolonged for many years.

the wonder is that he was not killed on the spot. Yet he recovered from the shock, and still went on working. At length he became paralysed, and at last passed away to his welcome rest in his thirty-seventh year. It was a short but beautiful life, full of quick enjoyment, though sadly chequered by suffering and pain. Had Robertson, amidst all his knowledge, known something of the conditions of physical and mental health, his moral suicide might never have happened.

The lives of literary men are full of warnings as to the dangers arising from over brain-work. Sir Walter Scott used to say that he regarded literature as a staff rather than a crutch. But the time arrived when he came to regard it as both staff and crutch. "Woe to him," said Madame de Tencin, "who depends for his subsistence upon his pen! The shoemaker is secure of his wages; the bookmaker is not secure of anything." Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*, said: "Never pursue literature as a trade; with the exception of one extraordinary man, I have never known an individual healthy or happy without a profession,—that is, some regular employment, which does not depend on the will of the moment. . . . Money and immediate reputation form only an arbitrary and accidental end of literary labour. The hope of increasing them by any given exertion will often prove a stimulant to industry; but the necessity of acquiring them will, in all works of genius, convert the stimulant into a narcotic. . . . If facts are required to prove the possibility of combining weighty performances in literature with full and independent employment, the works of Cicero and Xenophon among the ancients; of Sir Thomas More, Bacon, Baxter, or, to refer at once to later and contemporary instances, Darwin and Roscoe, are at once decisive of the question. . . . Be not *merely* a man

of letters! Let literature be an honourable *augmentation* to your arms, but not constitute the crest, or fill the escutcheon."[1] This was wise advice; but it was not acted on by Coleridge himself. Perhaps the "extraordinary man" to whom he refers was his brother-in-law, Southey; to whom he left the maintenance of his wife and family at Keswick, while he himself was engaged in brilliant monologues at the house of his friend, Mr. Gillman, on Highgate Hill, London. Southey certainly "pursued literature as a trade"; and though it shortened his life, his was an honest, industrious, virtuous, and indeed a noble career.

Macaulay, however, had something to say in favour of literary employment. While in India, he wrote to his friend Ellis (in 1835): "Literature has saved my life and my reason. Even now I dare not, in the intervals of business, remain alone for a minute without a book in my hand. . . . I am more than half determined to abandon politics, and to give myself wholly to letters; to undertake some great historical work which may be at once the business and the amusement of my life; and to leave the pleasures of pestiferous rooms, sleepless nights, aching heads, and diseased stomachs, to Roebuck and Praed."

De Tocqueville was warned of danger by his memory leaving him; but he was so immersed in his studies that the warning was unheeded, and he went on writing to the end. "I rise at six," he said, "and sit for six hours before my paper, and often leave it still white. Sometimes I find what I am looking for, but find it painfully and imperfectly; sometimes I am in despair at not finding it at all. I leave work discontented with myself, and therefore with everything else."[2] Disraeli the elder was subject to the same literary

[1] Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, chap. xi.

[2] De Tocqueville, *Memoirs and Remains*, ii. p. 435.

malady—"a failing of nervous energy, occasioned by study and too sedentary habits, early and habitual reverie, and restless and indefinable purpose." Yet by careful regimen, abstinence from excitement, and regular exercise, he contrived to live and labour to a ripe old age.[1] Professor Wilson, like Scott, suffered from *Morbus Eruditorum;* he had an attack of paralysis—his first warning. He went on as usual, and had another attack, which carried him off. The pitcher went once too often to the well, and came back broken at last.[2]

Men of exalted intellect, said Pinel, perish by their brains; such is the end of those whose genius procures the immortality which so many of them ardently desire. Heavy, indeed, are the penalties which men have to pay for distinction. It is born of labour and brain-work, and is reached through self-sacrifice, unrest, and often suffering. Genius, though a possession of glory, is often found one of sorrow. "Poor great men," says Saint Beuve, in his *Memoir of Ballanche*, "so infirm in your greatness; great because you are infirm, and infirm because you are great! Philosophers or poets, thinkers or singers, do not set the one above the other, do not except yourselves, do not boast. . . . Bleeding fibres were the origin of the first cords of the lyre: they will also

[1] *Curiosities of Literature*, (edition 1865). Memoir by Lord Beaconsfield, p. xxi.

[2] A list of the victims of paralysis and apoplexy, the result of over brain-work, would be a long one; but a few of the more illustrious may be given: Copernicus, Malphigi, Linnæus, Cheselden, Spallanzani, Cabanis, Corvisart, Dupuytren, La Bruyère, Daubenton, Marmontel, Monge, Cuvier, Fourcroy, Handel, Gluck, Hobbes, Dugald Stewart, Monboddo, De Foe, Swedenborg, Richardson, Dollond, Dalton, Wollaston, St. Frances de Sales, Petrarch, Beattie, Tom Moore, Mendelssohn, Heine, Porson, Curran, Garrick, Sir H. Davy, Sir W. Scott, Lockhart, Wilson, Tegner, Sir W. Hamilton (Edin.) Some of these men, however, lived to an advanced age.

be the last. It was because the statue of Memnon was broken, that it gave forth its musical sounds at the rising of the sun." [1]

Everything, it is true, is shortlived. Life passes swiftly, and death comes surely and quickly. And for what is literary instruction desired? Glory and fame? A slight noise in a little corner of the earth—"a splash in the great pool of oblivion," "an imagined existence in the breath of others." What is beauty? A rose that lasts but for a day. Health? A blessing which you may lose at any moment. Youth and vigour? Treasures which time every day devours. Sensitive minds cannot help reflecting on the fleetingness of all human enjoyments. There is an intellectual sadness which overcasts the best and brightest—the thought of man's utter insignificance in the immensity of the creation amidst which he lives; the merest fraction of time which his life occupies in the boundlessness of eternity; and the extremely little that he does know or can know compared with the vast domain of knowledge and science that must ever remain altogether unknown.

At the same time, men and women are bound to cultivate the faculties with which they have been entrusted:—

> "What is a man,
> If his chief good, and market of his time,
> Be but to sleep and feed?—a beast, no more.
> Sure He that made us with such large discourse
> Looking before and after, gave us not
> That capability and godlike reason
> To fust in us unused."

Every function should be duly and properly exercised—of mind as well as body. We ought at all events to know something of the ordinary conditions of life. A little un-

[1] Saint Beuve, *Portraits Contemporains*, i. p. 301.

prejudiced observation and some knowledge of physiology would enable the thinker—poet, author, or philosopher—to do his work with comfort as well as impunity. Pinel held that the study of the exact sciences, in moderation, fortified the mind and preserved it against derangement. His opinion is justified by the statistics of longevity. Moderation in everything is to be observed: the *aurea mediocritas* so much extolled by Horace. Good temper, too, is almost as requisite as moderation. Thus life may be utilised and prolonged.

Magistrates (who are usually of assured income), clergymen, and philosophers,[1] are the longest lived; then merchants and gardeners; then surgeons[2] and butchers. The shortest lives are those of millers, bakers, stone-cutters, and licensed victuallers. Dr. Guy read a paper at a recent meeting of the Statistical Society, in which he stated that the average age of nine of the chief Latin poets was fifty-three; and that of nine of the chief English poets was forty-two. In general, women (not being bread-winners, nor troubled with business worry) live longer than men; and married men longer than bachelors. Length of days is usually secured by leading a virtuous life; in fact, physical and moral health are as nearly related as body and soul; and longevity bears an intimate relationship to human comfort and happiness.

The evils of mental excitement and over brain-work have of late years been much increased by over-pressure in schools. "How many have I seen in my time," said

[1] At a recent meeting of the London Linnæan Society, the deaths of sixteen Fellows were reported, whose average age was seventy-three.—*Journal of Statistical Society*, 1859.

[2] Voltaire remarked that among centenarians, not one was from the faculty of medicine. The king of France, he said, had interred forty of his physicians.

Montaigne, "totally brutified by an immoderate thirst after knowledge."[1] The cry of the present day is "Education," but it is education in books, and books only. "Read, read, read!" as if God had not given us bodies as well as brains to be cared for and cultivated. Boys and girls are pressed to school. There is a great competition amongst teachers, for their income depends upon "results." The pupils are crammed in the shortest possible time, and the most delicate of organs, the brain, does more work in a month than it used to do in a year. Some, however, by competition, may appear prodigies, and take prizes. But what of health, which is worth more than many prizes? If not worn out by over-excitement, the prize pupils often end as invalids, and sometimes as imbeciles.

The theory that success in examinations is a test of what a boy may do in after-life is altogether fallacious. We have already seen that many of the most distinguished men were dull and backward at school. The late Lord Cockburn was almost forced to be a dunce by repeated floggings. He afterwards said that he "had a distrust of duxes, and thought boobies rather hopeful." Indeed, the dull boy, or the boy who has begun his education late, and has therefore had more time to grow and exercise his physical powers, rapidly overtakes and passes in the race of life those who have been in school-harness long before him. It is better that the brain should lie fallow, than that it should be over-trained at the sacrifice of health, which may never be regained. The altar of examination is the Moloch to which modern parents sacrifice their children. Exhibitions and scholarships stimulate their energies; and when they have "passed," and obtained all that they have struggled

[1] Montaigne's *Essays*: "Of the Education of Children," book i. chap. xxv.

for, what is their actual condition? They are often poor and worn-out creatures. Very few prize boys and girls stand the test of wear. Prodigies are always most uncertain; they illustrate the proverb of "soon ripe, soon rotten."

"The persons who were most successful at the University examinations," said the Rev. Boyd Carpenter (now Bishop of Ripon), "and distinguished themselves in after-life, were miserably small compared with those who were unsuccessful. The reason of this he believed to be the principle of cramming. The final end of education is to send a man into the world with the fullest possible mastery of himself and of his powers. It was useless to give a man educational training without developing the powers of energy, for a well-informed mind was of little use to any one unless he had a mind regulated to use it."

The comparative uselessness of the University examination test has been proved by the result of recent appointments to the Indian Civil Service. Health, physical ability, and strength of constitution to stand a tropical climate, were disregarded; and young men who took the highest marks, after prolonged examinations, were appointed to the Civil Service in India. "In Bombay," it has been officially reported, "the collapse of the system is complete. Since the institution of the competition, out of the hundred odd civilians appointed to this Presidency, nine have died, and two were forced to retire on account of physical debility; ten more were considered quite unfit for their work on account of their bodily weakness; two others were dismissed for inability to ride, and uncouth manners; and eight have positively become insane. . . . These cases of insanity are nearly all crowded into the last few years, during which the standard of examination has been raised, as is necessary under the competitive system,

to the highest pitch. . . . Imagine the government of a country like India being administered in half a dozen and more distant districts by mad civil servants!"[1]

The waste of life, health, and sanity, involved by this blood and brain tax of competitive examination, is terrible to contemplate. Instead of education fortifying the mind and body for the world's work; strengthening the character by habit and discipline; filling the mind with useful and practical knowledge; developing courage, patience, tenacity of purpose, and physical endurance as the foundation of the practical exercise of these great moral qualities; education, as now conducted, seems rather to be a cramming and forcing into the mind of certain descriptions of knowledge, calculated merely to enable one to "pass" in a competitive examination, but of comparatively little use in the business of actual life.

But if over brain-work is prejudicial to boys and young men, it is still more so to girls and young women. Competitive education of girls is now the rage. They, too, are offered up as sacrifices on the altar of examination. With what result? They often break down, and their physical health is ruined for life. Indeed, their constitution is unequal to the sacrifice. Their brain, their configuration, their functions, are different from those of the other sex, and the duties they have to fulfil are almost the reverse. It is amazing how much young women can do in the way of "cramming," though they do so at a terrible cost. They become mere bundles of nerves; their over-worked brains consume their bodies; and the very process by which educators seek to perfect the race tends to its degeneration.

The late Professor F. D. Maurice sounded a note of warning at the meeting of the Social Science Congress at

[1] *Times*, 11th December 1882.

Bristol in 1869. Speaking of the present examination system, he said that it was undermining the physical, intellectual, and moral life of young men, and that it would do this with even more terrible effect upon girls if they were admitted to all the privileges of the other sex. Parents and physicians alike groan over the loss of physical energy and the shattering of nerves which they see in young people who have either succeeded or failed in their trials. "The disease," said Professor Maurice, "is becoming a very serious one;" he could get no one to think of it seriously enough, or to suggest any remedy. Meanwhile it went on increasing, people deciding with a shrug that it was a necessary evil.

The Rev. Canon Kingsley, who read the Professor's letter to the Congress, did not sufficiently support it, though he did say that "the frames of women were so organised that they could bear these privations for a time,"—that is, their enthusiasm for educational equality with men, which would lead them to undergo the privations of sleep, of food, of quiet, that would tell upon them with evil effect hereafter,—"they could bear them without immediate evidence of mischief, but not without an eventual Nemesis of severe and sometimes of permanent illness."

But surely this premature forcing of girls' minds need not be a "necessary evil." When nature cries out against it, parents should come to their rescue. Physicians protest against the custom, and their advice ought not to go unheeded. The discipline of education ought to be in every sense a preparation for the duties of life; and the "cramming" with ephemeral knowledge, or with barren facts, which are soon to be forgotten, can never promote the joys and blessings of family life. As for women taking the place of men in the work of active life, and becoming either sailors,

soldiers, surgeons, barristers, or other occupations or professions, the thought is unworthy of serious consideration.

Women have not the physical health to stand heavy work, still less heavy brain-work, which is more exhausting than muscle-work. Owing to the stronger constitution of young men while at school or college, they are able to face an amount of work for which the tenderer frame of girls is altogether unsuited. And whatever may be the effects of the competitive examination of girls, with a view to their elevation into social and professional equality with men, there can be little doubt that their first effects will be a large crop of nervous and brain diseases, chorea,[1] hysteria, and eventually the derangement of their vital functions, and an entire prostration of their bodily health.

That cramming and competition are not necessary to evoke the highest intellectual powers in women may be illustrated by the history of Mrs. Somerville (*née* Fairfax). When a girl she was bright and lively, took plenty of exercise, and was therefore healthy. Her father was at sea, but her mother taught her to read the Bible. She worked in the garden, laid carnations, pruned apple-trees, and budded roses. When her father came home from sea, she

[1] Among the results of compulsory education, the nervous disease entitled St. Vitus's Dance is rapidly increasing. Dr. Octavius Sturges, in the *Lancet* of 15th January 1887, shows that of all the cases of Chorea which passed through his hands last year as physician to the Great Ormond Street Hospital, more than one-third were clearly attributable to school causes. More than twice the number of cases were of girls than of boys, because of the smaller brain of the former and their more delicate organisation. "Speaking from evidence," says Dr. Sturges, "the causes of the disease are as follows: (1) Over-schooling, when the hours are too long, and the lessons (especially *sums*) too hard. (2) Excitement in schooling, especially at examinations. (3) Home lessons, when there is no home to speak of, or no home leisure. (4) Caning, and other modes of punishment, particularly when unmerited."

was nine years old, and he was shocked to find her "such a savage." Yet she was a good and healthy girl. Her father sent her to a boarding-school, the regulations of which she detested. But the education did her good. When she went home she was helpful and industrious; she sewed for the family, being a remarkably neat needlewoman. She made and mended her own clothes, rose early to play the piano, and painted when she could spare the time. She learnt to cook, attended to the dairy, and by the time that she married was an excellent housewife.

Her first husband (Grey) did not encourage her in learning; but her second husband (Somerville) counselled and advised her. Mrs. Somerville learnt botany while she had an infant at her breast. She had also time to watch the stars, whose mysteries she was afterwards to unravel to others. She also learnt something of *Euclid*. She took no service from her family, but merely gave to science those hours which other women in the same station give to gossip or dissipation. At length she wrote a book—and she did it amidst the clattering and chattering of her children—*On the Mechanism of the Heavens*. She was thirty-seven before she made her first contribution to science, and she did it at the instance of Lord Brougham. It is worthy of remark that her wonderful mental faculties, though developed late, remained fresh and active to the last, and at the age of eighty she gave to the world her last work, *On Molecular and Microscopic Science*. It is not often, however, that we find a Mrs. Somerville. The close application, the plodding industry, and the prolonged mental strain which are required of those who devote themselves to the study of abstract science are very rare in men, and still rarer in women.

CHAPTER VII

HEALTH—HOBBIES

Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.—WORDSWORTH.

Health is a great matter, both to the possessor of it and to others. . . . For, does not health mean harmony, the synonym of all that is true, justly ordered, good; is it not, in some sense, the net-total, as shown by experiment, of whatever worth is in us? The healthy man is a most meritorious product of nature, so far as he goes. A healthy body is good; but a soul in right health—it is the thing beyond all others to be prayed for; the blessedest thing the earth receives of Heaven.—T. CARLYLE.

There is no riches above a sound body, and no joy above the joy of the heart.—*Ecclesiasticus.*

Ce n'est pas assez d'avoir des grandes qualites, il faut en avoir l'economie.—LAROCHEFOUCAULD.

Infantes sumus, et senes videmur,
Non vivere, sed valere, vita est.—MARTIAL.

RECREATION is creation: the word implies it. It is a second creation, when toil of body or brain has exhausted the animal or mental spirits. Sleep itself is a recreation, and the sounder the sleep the more is the health recuperated. But there is a recreation of another sort required for brain-workers, and that is active recreation. All vigorous nations are characterised by the vigour of their recreations. Among ourselves, it exhibits itself in out-door sports,—in cricket, lawn-tennis, football, hunting,

fowling, grouse-shooting, boat-racing, golf, jack and grayling fishing,—which are carried on even in winter, until the sportsmen are fairly frozen out.

That only can be called exercise which occasions free and full expansion of the lungs. The centre of life is in a great measure seated in the chest. If it be true that the whole mass of blood in the body passes through the heart and lungs twelve times in the hour—there to be vivified and redistributed to the extremities of the system—the importance of full inhalation and exhalation will at once be recognised. These are necessary for the health of body as well as of mind, and for the revivification of the muscles as well as of the brain. Indeed, strength of purpose and power of brain depend in no small degree upon strength of chest, and power of thinking upon the power of the breathing apparatus. The potential principle, the power of willing strongly and with decision, usually manifests itself in a solid intelligence, combined with a sustained energy of vital action. Philosophy has been in the wrong not to descend more deeply into the physical system; for there it is that the moral and mental man lies concealed.

"I am convinced," says Dr. Reveillé-Parise, "that age begins and advances through the lungs—that this organ, essentially vascular and permeable, absorbs air, and in a measure digests it and assimilates it to our substance; and that nere the deterioration of the human organism begins. If it were possible to bring the sanguification of the blood to its full perfection, I have no doubt that the true means of prolonging human life would thus be found. Future generations will decide the question if it is ever permitted to man to solve such a problem."[1]

[1] Reveillé-Parise, *Physiologie et Hygiene des Hommes livrés aux Travaux de L'Esprit*, i. pp. 237, 238.

At all events it must be admitted that, in order to secure the full working power of the mind, and to maintain it in its healthy action, the bodily organs must receive their due share of attention. Man must live in accordance with nature, and conformable with the laws under which his body has been designed and framed; otherwise he will suffer the inevitable penalty of pain and disease. For the law of the body is no more to be set at defiance than the law of gravitation. It is not necessary that one should be constantly thinking of how this or that function is being performed. Self-consciousness of this sort amounts to a disease. But, in order to live according to nature, some reasonable knowledge of the laws of life seems to be necessary in every complete system of education; for our daily happiness as well as our mental vigour entirely depend upon the healthy condition of the bodily frame, which the soul inhabits, and through which the mind works and creates.

"Happiness," says Sydney Smith, "is not impossible without health, but it is of very difficult attainment. I do not mean by health an absence of dangerous complaints, but that the body should be kept in perfect tune, full of vigour and alacrity."[1] It is the misfortune of the young to be early thrown out of "perfect tune" by the indiscreet efforts of their parents to force their minds into action earlier than nature intended. The result is dissonance, want of harmony, and derangement of function. The nervous system is over excited, while the physical system is neglected. The brain has too much work to do, and the bodily organs too little. The mind may be fed, but the appetite is lost, and society is filled with pale-faced dyspeptics. "Anything is better," says Dr. O. W. Holmes, "than the white-blooded

[1] Sydney Smith, *Memoirs and Letters*, i. p. 126.

degeneration to which we all tend." The pleasure of the honey scarcely repays for the smart of the sting. As Martial said long ago, "life is only life when blest with health."

We have already referred to the damage done to life and health in the case of boys, and still more so in the case of girls, and therefore need not again refer to the profanity of cramming. Without entering into physiological details, it may, nevertheless, be averred that the naturally stronger physical constitution of boys at the age of puberty enables them to face an amount of brain-work, for which the tenderer constitution of girls at that period altogether unfits them.

Overwork has unfortunately become one of the vices of our age, especially in cities. In business, in learning, in law, in politics, in literature, the pace is sometimes tremendous, and the tear and wear of life becomes excessive. The strain of excitement bears heavily on the delicate part of our system. Nature is ever fighting a battle against decay through the tissues. These are wasted by labour of body and mind, and repaired by food, sleep, and rest. But the waste is often greater than the enfeebled digestion can repair; and though the exhaustion may be artificially excited by stimulants, it can only be effectually remedied by relaxation and exercise, to enable the delicate brain cells and the equally delicate stomach to recover their healthy action.

The activity of the mind, without pressing it by overwork, is doubtless as pleasurable as that of the body; but the pleasure, to be thoroughly enjoyed, must be followed by repose. Man loves life; it is his instinct to love it so long as pleasure accompanies the healthy action of mind and body. "And what thinkest thou," said Socrates to Aristodemus, "of this continual love of life, this dread of dissolution, which takes possession of us from the moment that we

are conscious of existence." "I think of it," he answered, "as the means employed by the same great and wise artist, deliberately determined to preserve what he has made." These words are as true now as when they were spoken more than two thousand years ago. The ancient Greeks, amongst their various wisdom, had an almost worshipful reverence for the body as being the habitation of the soul. They gave their body recreation as well as their mind.

Socrates was one of the wisest of men. He wrote no books; he only discoursed to his friends and pupils as he walked; and all that we know of him has come down to us through the recollections of his disciples and admirers. According to one of the traditions which survive respecting Socrates, he is said, for variety of recreation, to have ridden a wooden horse. When not in the humour for physical exercise, he played upon the lyre, which tuned and tempered his mind. Plato, like his master, was a great believer in recreation, and excelled in all the Grecian exercises; while Aristotle, in his fourth Ethic, held that play and diversion were no less necessary for healthy life than rest and refreshment. The ancient Greeks adopted the most rational methods for educating and developing the whole nature of man. They regarded physical education as the basis of moral and mental education: they sought to train the bodily powers and develop the muscular energies at the same time that they cultivated the mind by discipline and study. A sound mind in a sound body, was one of their current maxims.

In order that the mind should act with vigour and alacrity when required, it is needful that it should have frequent intervals of recreation and rest. It is only thus that its healthfulness can be retained. The bow cannot be always bent, otherwise its elasticity will be irretrievably injured.

One of the early fathers has put on record a traditionary story of the Apostle John, which teaches the lesson in a simple yet forcible manner. A hunter passing his dwelling one day, saw the beloved disciple seated at his door caressing a little bird in his hand with the delight of a child. The hunter was surprised at so devout a man thus wasting his time. Observing his astonishment, the apostle said to the hunter, "Why do you not keep your bow always bent?" —"Because it would soon lose its strength if it were always strung," was the reply. "Well," rejoined the apostle, "it would be the same with my mind: if I gave it no relaxation, it would, in like manner, soon lose its force."

Thus, idleness is not all idleness. In the case of the brain-worker, it is his only remedy for sleepless nights, excited nerves, fluttering heart, irritability of temper, and difficulty of digestion. There is no prescription more effectual in such cases than rest—perfect rest. But there are minds which will not rest, and cannot muster the moral courage to be idle. Yet the gospel of leisure and recreation is but the correlation of the gospel of work; and the one is as necessary for the highest happiness and wellbeing of man as the other.

Some have wisely mingled relaxation and physical exercise with study. Ælian relates of Agesilaus, that on being found by a friend riding upon a stick for the amusement of his son, he bade his visitor not speak of it to any one until he was a father himself. Henry IV. of France was a great lover of his "little platoon of children" at home, and delighted in their gambols and caprices. One day, when trotting round the room on his hands and knees, with the Dauphin on his back, and the other children urging him on to gallop in imitation of a horse, an ambassador suddenly entered, and surprised the royal family in the midst of their play. Henry, without rising, asked "Have *you* children, M.

l'Ambassadeur."—"Yes, sire."—"In that case I proceed with the sport."

Boileau was a great skittle player. This was also a favourite game of Luther's, who not only played skittles, but played the guitar and the flute, turned articles in wood, and devoted a portion of his time to the society of women and children. His favourite distich was,—

> "Wer nicht liebt Wein, Weiber, und Gesang,
> Der bleibt ein Narr sein Lebenlang."

Calvin, although no great lover of amusements, used to play with his children at Geneva on Sundays in public, to show that he considered the observance of the seventh day as well as of saints' days to be no longer binding upon Christian men. Yet, after all, the seventh day of rest is a thing to be remembered and preserved as the only legal relief from the turmoils of daily week-day work.

As the late Lord Beaconsfield said:—"I am perfectly free to admit that there is a difference between the Christian Sunday and the Jewish Sabbath, and I cannot agree with those who would extend to the observance of the Christian Sunday the rules and regulations of the Jewish Sabbath. If there be any who desire to do it, they would utterly fail to accomplish that purpose. Of all divine institutions I maintain the most divine is that which secures a day of rest for man. . . . It is the religious principle which, to a certain extent, is admitted by all—at least by all classes that have influence and numbers in this country; it is that principle we must take care should not be discarded if we wish to maintain that day of rest which I hold to be the most valuable blessing ever conceded to man. It is the corner-stone of all civilisation, and it would be very difficult to estimate what might be the deleterious effects,

even upon the health of the people, if there were no cessation from that constant toil and brain-work which must ever characterise a country like this, so advanced in its pursuits and civilisation."

Not long ago the Bishop of Sodor and Man, after a confirmation, engaged in a game of cricket with the school boys. He was delighted to know that the game was to be played. He joined the young fellows at the wickets, and said: "I'll make the best long-stop among you, for I have got my apron." He himself afterwards said of the event: "That impression never passed away from the minds of these boys. They felt that they had amongst them a man, speaking on the highest and holiest subjects—leading them up to all that confirmation was intended to lead them to—but still remembering that their bodies required healthful recreation." Therefore he went out, and for the rest of the afternoon he played cricket with the boys on whose heads he had solemnly placed his hands in confirmation. From that time the bishop was never named in the parish without some profitable thoughts arising in the minds of the young people.

Celsus advised the man who would continue in health to have a diversity of callings or studies — now to study or work, and to be intent—then again to hawk or hunt, swim, run, ride, or exercise himself. It was a rule which Loyola imposed upon his followers, that after two hours of work, the mind should always be unbent by some recreation. The power of keeping the mind occupied with something external to our studies or pursuits is highly to be valued. Cæsar wrote: "Under my tent, in the fiercest struggles of war, I have always found time to think of many other things." This thinking of many other things is perhaps the secret of strength.

There is a sort of idleness which may be called a waste of existence, and there is another sort which may be called an enjoyment of existence. Leisure is always valuable to those who can find change of occupation in the spare time at their disposal. Men accustomed to the desk and the study are so averse to spend idle hours, and yet are so little inclined to active exercise, that they often seek for relaxation in mere change of study. They rest from brain-work of one kind to enter upon another. D'Aguesseau, the great Chancellor of France, said that change of study was his only relaxation. Geometry and algebra have been among the most consoling recreations of the learned. When Sir Matthew Hale felt exhausted by his excessive labours on the bench, he refreshed himself by working out a few algebraical problems. Fénelon, when a student, took refuge from divinity in geometry, although he was seriously warned against its "bewitchments" and "diabolical attractions" by his Jesuit teachers. In like manner, Professor Simson, when he found himself perplexed and wearied by clerical controversies, retired for peace and shelter to the certain science of mathematical truth, "where," said he, "I always find myself refreshed with rest." Molyneux, the Irish barrister, was led by domestic sorrow to seek consolation in the study of mathematics. "This," he says, "was my grand *pacificum:* such was the opiate that lulled my troubled thoughts to sleep."

Lord Brougham amused himself in his old age by the same study, varied by optics, light, and natural theology. He relates that Lord Cottenham, who had been a successful student of mathematics in his early years, reverted to them for relaxation when filling the highest legal office ;[1] while it is

[1] "As late as 1838," says Lord Brougham, "when I was engaged in preparing my *Analytical Review of the Principia*, I found that, by

well known that the late Sir Frederick Pollock, while Chief-Baron of the Exchequer, found relief from his graver labours on the bench by recreation in mathematics and geometry. Sir Isaac Newton, when exhausted by severe study, relaxed himself by dabbling in ancient chronology and the mysteries of the Apocalypse; while Mendelssohn, the German scholar, when he felt fatigued by overwork, gave his mind rest by going to the window and counting the tiles on the roof of his neighbour's house. Spinoza's relaxation consisted in change of study, in conversation with friends, and in an occasional pipe. He sometimes amused himself by watching spiders fight, when he would laugh till the tears rolled down his cheeks. Johnson says, no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures; yet Spinoza was a most kindly man and by no means cruel.

Literature, however, has always furnished the largest amount of sedentary amusement for busy brain-workers. Often a book soothes the mind better than the most potent anodyne. The writing of a book, be it good or bad, does the same. Vattel varied his studies on the *Law of Nations* by writing a *Discourse on Love*, as well as occasional poetry. Frederick the Great, ambitious of literary as well as martial reputation, wrote verses; and Voltaire declares that he could not correct them without laughter. Voltaire's amusement was private theatricals and marionettes. The philosopher of Ferney is said to have been skilful in pulling the strings and managing a puppet show. He built a theatre at

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an accidental coincidence, Lord Cottenham was amusing his leisure with the Calculus; and I am sure that he could have furnished as correct and more elegant analytical demonstrations of the Newtonian theorems than I had the fortune to obtain in composing that work."—Lord Brougham, *Philosophers of the Time of George III.* (edition 1855), pp. 388, 389.

La Chatelaine, near Geneva (now used as a hayloft), for which he wrote plays, and acted as stage-manager.

Volta, the electrician, was also a writer of verses: and Mr. Gleig says of Warren Hastings, that: "A copy of verses was as natural an operation as his morning's meal." Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, when Mr. Stratford Canning, wrote verses which commanded the praise of even so great a poet as Lord Byron. His verses on Buonaparte "were worth," said Lord Byron, "a thousand odes of anybody's." "I was aware," he added, "that he was a man of talent, but did not suspect him of possessing all the family talents in such perfection." Lord Tenterden, after the lapse of thirty years, following the example of Lords Grenville and Holland, returned to the composition of Latin metres; though he confessed that "it might be said that a Chief-Justice and a Peer might employ his leisure hours better than in writing nonsense verses about flowers."[1] James Watt, the inventor of the condensing steam-engine, and Thomas Telford, the builder of the bridge over the Menai Straits, wrote poetry while they were young men. Watt, in his old age, was a great devourer of novels, over which he and his aged wife had many a hearty cry. Sir Charles Napier was not satisfied with being the victor of Meanee; but when he retired from the office of Commander-in-Chief in India, feeling it impossible to be idle, he occupied his leisure hours in composing a romance entitled *William the Conqueror*. This was afterwards published; and, like the verses of the above cited judges, ambassadors, politicians, electricians, and engineers, it is now regarded as a curiosity of literature.

Great has been the consolation which literature has afforded to statesmen wearied of the turmoil and bitterness

[1] Sir Egerton Brydges, *Autobiography*, i. pp. 417-424, where several specimens of his lordship's verse-making are given.

of party strife. Though the door of politics may for a time be closed to them, that of literature stands always open. In his saddest moments, translation roused the flagging spirits of Addison. When Pitt, on one occasion, retired from office, he reverted, with much relish, to the study of the Greek and Latin classics; while Fox forgot the annoyances of party polemics in the company of Euripides and Herodotus. Canning and Wellesley, when thrown out of office, occupied themselves with translating the odes and satires of Horace. Lord Redesdale did the same thing when laid up by an accident which he met with in the hunting-field.

Among the other ministerial authors were Lord Normanby, who wrote the novel entitled *No;* Earl Russell, who produced a tragedy (*Don Carlos*) and a novel (*The Nun of Arronea*), both very inferior productions. Lord Palmerston had the credit of producing several excellent *jeu d'esprit* in the *New Whig Guide* while Lord Liverpool was minister. Lord Brougham was an indefatigable author, producing not only works on optics, history, biography, and general literature, but being also a large contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*. Even when he was canvassing Liverpool in 1812, and while in the midst of the severest struggles in law and politics, Lord Brougham was minutely superintending Leigh Hunt's translation of the *Ode to Pyrrha*, and suggesting fresh delicacies for his version of *Acme and Septimius*. Lord Derby and Mr. Gladstone have evinced their abiding attachment to ancient literature. The English *Iliad* of Lord Derby will be read with delight when his brilliant and elegant speeches have been forgotten; and the Homeric *Studies* of Mr. Gladstone will be remembered with pride long after his subtle brain has ceased to perplex the principles and divide the parties of the political world.

Some statesmen have been ready enough to leave the distressing turmoil of politics. To Sir Robert Walpole's honour, it is recorded that he retired after more than twenty years of power with a temper not soured, with a heart not hardened, with simple tastes and frank manners, and with a capacity for friendship and literature. Carteret, after a hard fight for power, was driven from office; and from that time he relinquished all ambitious hopes, and retired to the consolation of his books. "I met Lord Melbourne," writes Mr. Leslie, the artist, "at Lord Holland's, a day or two after he ceased to be prime minister; he was as joyous as ever, and only took part in the conversation respecting the changes in the royal household (which were not then completed) so as to make everybody laugh." Lord Althorpe's loss of office in 1832 was anything but a calamity. He went through it with cheerfulness. The day after his resignation he went to a florist's, and chose and bought a number of flowers, carrying five great packages back with him in his carriage. He spent the evening in determining where these should be planted in his gardens at Althorpe, and wrote out the necessary directions for the gardener, and drew out the plans for their arrangement. This did not look like bearing calamity with bitterness. Indeed the change of pursuit, from politics to gardening, was brimful of pleasure to Lord Althorpe. He not only occupied himself with gardening, but spent a portion of his time in the study of natural theology.

"I have a fine library of books," said a sage, "and an excellent garden, which I cultivate with my own hands to my great delight—an occupation which needs no excuse, for surely there can be no purer pleasure, morally or materially, than to see the earth bearing beautiful blossoms from seed of your own setting." Even men of abundant com-

petence find the greatest pleasure in enjoying the fruits of their own work. The rustic chair of one's own construction, the flowers and fruits of one's own growing, the vegetable frame of one's own carpentry, are among the most pleasing of all things. They have the aroma of industry about them, which is always relished as the fruits of painstaking.

When Dioclesian was petitioned to resume the Imperial Purple, which he had resigned, he replied to the messengers: "You would not have asked such a thing of me if you saw the fine melons I have now ripening, and the plantations about my villa that I have made." Horace and Virgil were both fond of gardening and country life. The first wish of Virgil was to be a good philosopher, and the second to be a good husbandman. Cato spoke of planting as one of the greatest pleasures of old age. The enjoyment of a country life is the nearest neighbour—at least, next in kindred—to philosophy, in its usefulness, its innocent pleasure, its antiquity, and its dignity.

Lord Bacon, in his *Essays*, revelled in the beauty and pleasures of gardening. "God Almightie," he said, "first Planted a Garden. And indeed it is the Purest of Humane pleasures. It is the Greatest Refreshment to the Spirit of Man; without which, Buildings and Pallaces are but Grosse Handy-works: and a Man shall ever see that when Ages grow to Civility and Elegancie, Men come to Build Stately, sooner than to Garden Finely: as if Gardening were the Greater Perfection." In his essay *Of Gardens*, he proceeds to show that he was himself intimately acquainted with the flowers, shrubs, and hedges that should adorn a beautiful garden, and he gives their names for every month of the year. "You may have," he says, "*ver perpetuum* as the place affords. The Breath of Flowers is farre Sweeter in the Aire (where it comes and goes, like the warbling of

Music) than in the hand, therefore nothing is more fit for that delight than to know what be the Flowers and Plants that do best perfume the Aire."

Planting was the hobby of Shenstone, who devoted a great part of his life to the adornment of the Leasowes, until his possessions there became the envy and admiration of all who visited them. Horticulture was a passion with Evelyn and Temple. Evelyn decorated with beauty the grounds of Sayes Court, near Greenwich, and when Peter the Great of Russia lived there, one of his greatest amusements was to be rushed through one of Evelyn's holly-hedges in a wheelbarrow, very much to the destruction of the beautiful gardens.

Gardening was one of the solitary pleasures of Pope, who applied himself to the improvement of his toy domain at Twickenham. He adorned it with trees, lawns, a tunnel, and a grotto, and altered and trimmed it to perfection, like one of his own poems. Cowper also indulged in the pleasant art of gardening. With his own hands he built a greenhouse, wherein to grow his tropical plants and flowers, and he varied his occupation with an occasional game at battledore and shuttlecock with the ladies. Gardening was one of the last pleasures that the great engineer George Stephenson indulged in. He was troubled by the cucumbers, which *would* grow crooked; but he had large straight glass jars constructed, into which he inserted the growing fruit, saying: "I think I have bothered them noo," and then they grew straight.

Sir Walter Scott was a great planter on his estate at Abbotsford. He delighted in rambling about his domain with his dogs and his henchman Tom Purdie; planting young trees and pruning old ones with his woodman's axe. Once Sir Walter said to Purdie: "This will be a glorious

time for our trees, Tom;" to which Tom replied: "My certy, and I think it will be a grand season for *our buicks* too!" Lockhart said of Scott: "He was an expert as well as powerful wielder of the axe, and competed with his ablest subalterns as to the paucity of blows by which a tree could be brought down. The wood rang ever and anon with laughter while he shared their labours, and if he had taken, as he every now and then did, a whole day with them, they were sure to be invited home to Abbotsford to sup gaily with Tom Purdie."

Daniel Webster has been compared to Scott in this respect: he was fond to a degree of country life, with its occupations and pursuits, to which he had been brought up when a boy. He was an angler, a farmer, and a cattle breeder. Late in life he returned to Marshfield, as Scott did to Abbotsford, broken in mind, body, and estate—to die. As Scott said, on being wheeled through the rooms on his return from Italy: "I have seen much, but nothing like my ain home—give me one turn more;" so Webster said on returning from Washington to Marshfield: "Oh, I am so thankful to be here: if I could only have my will, never, never would I leave this home."

Among other unexpected woodmen may be mentioned Pitt, Wilberforce, Dr. Whately, and Mr. Gladstone. While Pitt was sustaining the load of government upon his shoulders, he would occasionally snatch a holiday, and post off with Wilberforce to his house at Holwood near Hayes Common. In the morning he would sally out with Wilberforce, both armed with billhooks, to hew out new walks amidst the old trees through the Holwood copses. Dr. Whately would fell a tree in lieu of taking a dose of physic. When he felt out of sorts, he took up his axe, and went out to hew away at some ponderous trunk. Mr. Gladstone has distinguished

himself by his axe as well as by his pen, and there can be little doubt that his felling of numerous trees has been the means of preserving the aged statesman's health. "Nothing rewards itself," said Sir Walter Scott, "so completely as exercise, whether of the body or the mind. We sleep sound, and our waking hours are happy, because they are employed; and a little sense of toil is necessary to the enjoyment of leisure, even when earned by study and sanctioned by the discharge of duty."

When Lord Collingwood retired from the naval service, in which he had earned so much honour, he returned to his estate in Northumberland, and enjoyed part of his time in digging trenches in his garden like a common day labourer. Niebuhr, towards the close of his life, bought a farm in his native province of Holstein, and farmed it himself. While pursuing his historical studies, he grew turnips and fed cattle; walking and riding, sometimes to great distances; and able, in his seventieth year, to vault over a ditch ten feet wide, with the aid of a leaping-pole, to the use of which he had been accustomed in his youth. Sydney Smith also was a farmer, not from choice but necessity. No one would take his glebe, which had been miserably mismanaged; so he undertook to farm the land himself. He would occasionally rise from the composition of a sermon, or the preparation of an article for the *Edinburgh Review*, to give his orders to the ploughmen from his front door through a tremendous speaking-trumpet.[1]

The favourite occupation of the great composer Verdi, who recently brought out his *Otéllo* at the age of seventy-three, was the prosaic one of farming. He was as much at home in crops and cattle as in counterpoint and thorough-

[1] The Rev. Sydney Smith, *Memoirs and Letters*, by Lady Holland, i. p. 214.

bass. The farmers in the vicinity of his villa at Sant' Agata looked up to him as an authority on all questions connected with the cultivation of the soil, and consulted him as to the rotation of crops and the breeding of cattle. He was not above lending a hand to his neighbours as occasion required. The famous Mario took a vineyard in the Roman States; but it turned out that he was a better singer than a vine-grower.

When Luther was oppressed by dyspepsia, his friend Melancthon recommended him to take regular and severe exercise. Luther endeavoured to try hunting and shooting. "I have been out sporting," he said, "two whole days, and trying to enjoy the bitter-sweet amusement of great heroes. I caught two hares, and two poor little partridges. 'Tis a fine occupation for one who has got nothing else to do. However, I did not entirely waste my time, for I theologised amid the nets and the bogs, and found a mystery of grief and pain in the very heart of all the joyous tumult around me." Luther, however, soon tired of the chase, and returned with redoubled energy to his heavy amount of brain-work. Voltaire—a very different sort of person—when afflicted by indigestion at Circy, went to "sport for an appetite." He usually found the appetite which he sought, though he rarely brought back any game, notwithstanding the showy shooting-jacket in which he was equipped. Lord Eldon had only one kind of recreation—shooting; but, like Sheridan, he was no sportsman, and did not care whether his birds came by descent or purchase.[1] Pitt occasionally hunted,

[1] The story is told of Sheridan having gone out shooting, when in the country. Everything flew away before him and his gun. He was coming home with an empty bag. Then he came up to a man, apparently a farmer, looking over a gate at a flock of ducks in a pool. "What will you take," said Sheridan, "for a shot at these ducks?" The man looked vacant. "Will half-a-crown do?" The man nodded.

but he took little pleasure in the sport, for his mind was elsewhere: he merely followed it for active exercise, probably thinking, with Dryden, that it was—

> "Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,
> Than fee the doctor for his noxious draught."

Of all exercises, perhaps riding on horseback is the most salutary. The saddle is the seat of health. Riding may be regarded as a concentrated essence of exercise. It gives play to the muscles and the lungs; and to breathe pure air—the *pabulum vitæ*, as the ancients termed it—is to breathe health. The blood is ventilated, while the skin, which is but an outside lining, is refreshed and fed by rapid motion through the air. Riding also facilitates circulation and nutrition, and assists the action of the excretory organs. If there be a specific for "bile," it is probably horse exercise.[1] Who ever heard of a bilious huntsman, or a gouty post-boy? "Who is your doctor," said some one to Carlyle;—"My best doctor," he replied, "is a horse." The wise Sydenham had such confidence in exercise on horseback, that in one of his medical works he says that: "If any man were possessed of a remedy that would do equal good to the human constitution as riding gently on horseback twice a day, he would be in the possession of what was worth the philosopher's stone."

Sheridan gave him the half-crown, and took his shot at the ducks. About half a dozen fell dead. When Sheridan was preparing to bag them, he said to the man: "I think, on the whole, I have got a good bargain of you."—"Why," said the man, "they're none o' mine!"

[1] Saddle-leather is in some respects even preferable to shoe-leather. The principal objection to it is of a financial character. You may be sure that Bacon and Sydenham did not recommend it for nothing. One's *Hepar*, or, in vulgar language, liver,—a ponderous organ, weighing some three or four pounds,—goes up and down like the clash of a churn in the midst of the other vital arrangements, at every step of a trotting horse, the brains also are shaken up like coppers in a money-box.—Oliver Wendell Holmes, *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table.*

Pope mentions a certain Lord Russell, who, by luxurious living, had spoilt his constitution; yet he went out with his dogs, almost daily, to hunt for an appetite. When he felt it returning he would say: "Oh, I have found it," and turning his horse short round, at once rode home again. Reveillé-Parise says: "Against melancholy, misanthropy, or spleen, I have recourse, according to circumstances, to rest, baths, small doses of hand labour, and also to the remedy vaunted by Lady Wortley Montagu—"horseback all day and champagne in the evening." Both Alfieri and Byron were great horseman; they rode long and furiously.

Lord Wellington was a devoted fox-hunter. He had his pack of hounds with him even in Spain, when following up with vigour the retreating French.[1] He continued to pursue the sport at home almost to the close of his life; finding relaxation in it from the toils of office. We find him, in 1826, apologising to Mr. Robinson for not answering a letter on an important public question, on the ground that "the usual sports of the autumn occupied his time." Lord Palmerston also was accustomed to pass several hours every day on horseback, except on Sundays, when he walked. Almost every night, at the close of the debate in the Commons, he walked home across the parks, no matter how late the hour might be. When Sir Francis Burdett was asked by Haydon the painter how he had contrived to preserve his health to such an old age, his answer was, that he used the bath often, drank no wine except when he dined out, and then sparingly, and hunted as much as he could.

[1] He caused his hounds to travel in the rear of the army, and had more than one day's hunting in the intervals of battles. They were regularly kennelled in Toulouse, where many a French gentleman saw for the first time—himself vainly striving to keep pace with the field—what English fox-hunting was.—Gleig, *Life of Wellington*, p. 241.

But hunting and riding are both expensive amusements, and entirely beyond the reach of thousands to whom they would simply be the gift of health and life. There are, however, plenty of other modes of recreation; and perhaps among the best of these is walking. This is within the reach of nearly everybody. It may be varied with bicycling or tricycling. Walking involves small muscular effort, and little cost beyond that of time and shoe leather. Unlike boating, angling, or riding, it needs no preparation, but can be resorted to and enjoyed at once. At the same time it must be said that walking does not sufficiently interfere with the action of the brain, which is often as active during a walk as in the study; and unless the mind is properly diverted, the exercise does not serve its purpose.

"I have often heard," said Cicero, "that when Lucilius and Scipio used to go into the country, escaping from their labours in the city as from bondage, they would amuse themselves and play boys' parts incredibly well. I dare hardly repeat of such men what Scaevola relates of them, how they used to go picking up shells along the shore at Caieta, and descend to all sorts of frolic and recreation." "In fact," he continues, "no one seems to me to be free who does not sometimes do nothing."[1] And elsewhere, he says: "There should be a haven to which we could fly from time to time, not of sloth and laziness, but of moderate and honest leisure."

The philosopher Hobbes was a regular and persistent walker down to the close of his prolonged life. His last years were spent at Chatsworth, in the family of the Earl of Devonshire, where he enjoyed the pleasant rest of mingled study and recreation. He devoted his mornings to exercise and his afternoons to study. In fine weather Hobbes rose

[1] Cicero, *De Oratore*, vii.

early, went out and climbed any hill within reach; or when the weather was wet he would exercise himself in some way or other within doors, so as to excite perspiration. Then he breakfasted, after which he made his family rounds, visiting the earl, the countess, and the children, in their respective rooms. He dined lightly at twelve, shortly after which he retired to his study, and had his candle with ten or twelve pipes of tobacco laid by him; then, shutting his door, he fell to smoking, thinking, and writing, for several hours.[1]

Immanuel Kant always devoted a certain portion of the day to walking; and never allowed the weather—no matter what it was—to prevent him. He usually dined in company, but ate and drank with great moderation. Unlike Hobbes, he devoted his mornings to study, and his evenings to conversation and light literature, thereby calming and relaxing his mind before retiring to rest. Like Hobbes, however, he was originally of a feeble constitution; yet, by carefully attending to the laws of health, Kant was enabled to prolong his life to eighty, as Hobbes did to ninety-two. These two cases show that profound thinking is by no means incompatible with length of years, provided due regard be had to the requirements of the physical constitution, through which the mind itself owes its healthy working capacity.

Goldsmith shortened his life by over-work and want of exercise; it was only very rarely that he left off writing. When he had thrown off a certain quantity of rhyme or natural history, he would propose to Cooke, a chum of his, to have what he called a Shoemaker's Holiday. This consisted in a ramble through the northern districts of London, or through the country lanes near Hampstead and Highgate,

[1] Dr. Kennet, *Memoirs of the Cavendish Family*.

followed by a dinner at a rural tavern, and a quiet pipe and tankard of ale to wind up with. Addison, too, confessed his weakness for a stroll. Lamb was a great walker, repeatedly traversing the whole of London, especially those streets which contained second-hand book stalls, while the northern and north-eastern districts of London were his familiar haunts. Archbishop Whately walked with vehemence, and smoked like a volcano; taking pleasure, like Lamb, in the dogs which accompanied him in his wanderings. In fact, it was while accompanied by his three uncompromising-looking dogs, during his constitutional walks, that he laid the foundations of his *Elements of Logic*, one of his best known works.

Walking cured Timothy Dwight, the well-known American author, of brain disease—which otherwise would have killed him. He was a too early brain-worker. At seventeen he was master of the Grammar School at Newham, in Massachusetts; and before he was twenty, he was a tutor in Yale College. He taught six hours, studied nine hours, and took no exercise. No human constitution could stand such a life; it was mere folly and madness. His nervous system became so irritable that he could not bear to read for more than fifteen minutes at a time. Then it suddenly came to an end; he was struck with blindness, and was consequently under the necessity of giving up all further attempts at study. But his mind was still active; and his walking powers were great. He recovered his sight; he set out upon long walking tours, which re-established his health; and we have the result in the valuable series of *Travels in the United States*, which he eventually gave to the world.

Another interesting walking-traveller was William Hutton of Birmingham. He had been a great walker and worker

from his boyhood. In his leisure hours he produced the *History of Birmingham*, and first became an author in his fifty-ninth year. Having retired from the business of a bookseller in favour of his son, at the age of seventy, he had some difficulty in knowing what to do with his time. He spent it in walking. He made walking tours into nearly all parts of England. In his seventy-eighth year he walked from Birmingham to Penrith, from thence following the line of the Roman Wall to Newcastle, returning to Penrith, and then back to Birmingham. In thirty-five days he walked with ease six hundred-and-one miles. His next task was to write and publish his *History of the Roman Wall*. After this, he made trips to Scarborough, Coatham, and other places, of which he published accounts, the last in his eighty-fifth year. In his eighty-eighth year, he wrote in his diary: "At the age of eighty-two, I considered myself a young man. I could, without much fatigue, walk forty miles a day. But during the last six years I have felt a sensible decay; and like a stone rolling down hill, its velocity increases with its progress." The last words in his *Diary* are these: "This day, October 11th, is my birthday. I enter upon my ninetieth year, and have walked ten miles." His daughter, who completed the *Life*, says that he always regarded his walking power as a test of his vitality, and that he believed that his walks and his life would finish together, which was really the case, as he ceased to walk, and died, in his ninety-second year.

The great Beethoven was troubled with deafness and nervous irritability towards the close of his life. Two peculiarities distinguished him: he was almost constantly taking long walks in the country, and changing his lodgings. He had no wife, and scarcely a settled home. He was no sooner installed in one apartment than he found some

fault with it, and went in search of another. When not thus occupied, he went and took a long and often fatiguing walk in the country. The exercise, he said, was necessary to allay the irritation of his brain, as well as to enable him to sleep. Rousseau herborised in the open fields, even in the dog-days. Scott, though partially lame, was a notorious walker. Dickens was noted for his pedestrian tours; he used to walk from his *Household Words* office in Wellington Street to his home at Gadshill, beyond Gravesend, and he often introduced the persons whom he encountered in his inimitable works.[1]

Professor Wilson, Southey, and Wordsworth, were all great walkers, scouring the beautiful Lake District, sometimes in couples, but often alone, amidst the mountains. Wilson, indeed, was an athlete. While at Oxford he was the best boxer, leaper, and runner, yet he carried off the Newdegate prize in 1806. He was a man of great physical strength and beauty. He was described as "a fair-haired Hercules-Apollo" by one who knew him at Oxford. He devoted his vacations almost entirely to pedestrian tours,—in Cumberland and Westmoreland, in Wales, in Scotland, and on one of such occasions he walked all over Ireland. When George IV. visited Edinburgh, Wilson was at Kelso and proposed to go by coach; but the seats were all taken. So next morning at four he bathed in the Tweed, dressed himself in hodden gray, took up his staff, and walked the distance of fifty-two miles, reaching Edinburgh in time for dinner.

Dr. Arnold loved, while at Oxford, to make what he called "a skirmish across country," and the taste for such pleasures never left him. At Laleham, he leapt, bathed, and rowed with his pupils, spending other portions of his

[1] See Dickens's *Uncommercial Traveller*.

spare time in gardening and walking. Later in life he took immense delight in the scenery of Westmoreland, amidst which he erected his summer home. He made long mountain walks, and used to dilate on the refreshment which he always derived from breathing the pure air of the hills. Indeed, mountain air is one of the best of all tonics, bracing the whole man in mind and body, far more than quinine or iron. For over brain-work, and the nervous debility which follows it, mountain air may almost be pronounced a specific.

It is possible, however, to have too much even of a good thing. Excursions into Switzerland, which is regarded as a sanatorium, are not unfrequently attended with evil results. In certain cases, the sudden ascent of a height excites the circulation too much, and the nervous irritability is increased. The patient cannot sleep, and this is only restored by descent to a medium height. Still, mountain air has a wonderful effect in nearly all cases connected with congestion of the brain. Some, however, take their holidays in too great a hurry. They rush from place to place, are in a worry about their luggage and impedimenta, and do not take that which brain-workers especially require—rest and recreation. Their strength becomes worn out, and they return home worse, instead of better. All this is very short-sighted. When it was observed to Aristotle that a particular friend had derived no benefit from his travels, the philosopher observed: "That is owing to his having travelled along with himself." Long ago, Horace advised his ailing friend to take a holiday as his best cure, and to give a slip to his client through the back door :—

"Et rebus omissis
Atria servantem postico falle clientem ;"

and very good advice it was. The late Sir Henry Holland

made it a rule to allow himself about three months' holiday every year, and he made his holiday a season of useful work and intelligent observation. But not many business men can afford so much time. They must take their holiday in a quieter way, and consume less time in the exercise. Some take to grouse-shooting, and others to angling. The latter is one of the most thoroughly resting of all recreations. Sir Henry Walton called it "idle time not idly spent." It gives the mind perfect rest, while the body is refreshed by breathing pure air, and the muscles are not fatigued by the exercise of throwing the line. Brain-workers sometimes hurry through their recreation, but they cannot do this in fishing. Walton and Cotton were among the first of our classical anglers, and their friendship was cemented by the interest which they took in their quiet sport. Walton enjoyed his "solitary vice" (as Byron terms it) until his ninety-first year, though he was not so long-lived as the famous Yorkshire fisher, Henry Jenkins, who is said to have survived to beyond his hundredth year. Dryden was another of the poet fishers, as well as Professor Wilson, who was an enthusiast in the art from his boyhood. Byron was an angler, but it was on the whole too slow a sport for his impetuous nature. It was the principal recreation of Emerson, the mechanical philosopher, who fished the Tees assiduously, often standing up to his middle in the water in order to cast his line over to the swirls and pools in which the trout lay. Sir Humphry Davy had almost as great a passion for salmon-fishing as Mr. John Bright. Davy rejoiced in taking up his rod and line, and leaving his laboratory for the river-side. His conversation usually led up to fishing and salmon, and the composition of the *Salmonia* is said to have given him greater pleasure than the preparation of any of his treatises on chemical science. He also

initiated Dr. Wollaston in the mysteries of the art, which afforded the latter much pleasure and recreation towards the close of his life.[1] Angling was also the delight of Sir Francis Chantry and Sir Charles Bell; they quitted their profession at times, and went into the country with rod and line to refresh themselves amidst the quiet and beauty of nature.

It must, however, be admitted that angling is a very "slow" amusement to persons of active habits. "Angling," said Sir Humphry Davy, "demands much patience, forbearance, and command of temper." It is therefore unsuitable for impetuous natures, who seek to condense their exercise within as small a portion of time as they can spare from their studies, or who love more active physical efforts. Hence Dr. Samuel Clarke took to leaping over the chairs and tables. Once while engaged in such an exercise he said, "Now we must stop, for a fool is coming in." Cardinal Richelieu was another jumper, and was once surprised by a visitor, who found him striving with his servant which should jump to the highest point of a wall.

Change of work is of itself a relaxation. Everything palls if long indulged in, and pleasure most of all. Rossini found relief from music in cookery; he was a consummate dresser

[1] Davy says of Wollaston, in his *Salmonia:* "There was—alas! that I must say 'there *was*'—an illustrious philosopher who was nearly of the age of fifty before he made angling a pursuit, yet he became a distinguished fly-fisher, and the amusement occupied many of his leisure hours during the last twelve years of his life. He, indeed, applied his pre-eminent acuteness, his science, and his philosophy to aid the resources and exalt the pleasures of this amusement. I remember to have seen Dr. Wollaston, a few days after he had become a fly-fisher, carrying at his button-hole a piece of caoutchouc, or india-rubber, when, by passing his silk-worm link through a fissure in the middle, he rendered it straight and fit for immediate use. Many other anglers will remember other ingenious devices of my admirable and ever-to-be lamented friend."

of cheese and maccaroni. Palates accustomed to the richest dishes will return with relish to the simplest fare; thus Soyer, the gastronomist, palled with scientific cuisinerie, when returning home at midnight from the dinners which he cooked, would stop at a stall in the Haymarket and luxuriate in eating a penny saveloy. So persons accustomed to the most sensational works will return with pleasure to the enjoyment of simple and unseasoned literary food.

Balzac rambled through the old curiosity shops of Europe for *bric-à-brac*; but this was for a purpose. He worked up the details of his gatherings of old furniture in his novels. Pugin kept a lugger with which he traded to and from the French ports, landing at the most inviting places, and enriching his portfolio with drawings of the choicest architectural works. It is very wholesome that professional men should have a hobby to take their minds out of their accustomed groove. The enjoyment of the hobby is something to look forward to; it is a diversion, a relief, a rest for the mind, however useless it may seem to be. Some have found relief in billiards, which are much more useful than counting the tiles on his neighbour's roof was to Moses Mendelssohn. Watching the balls roll into the pockets, or making canons, takes the mind out of its groove and gives the overworked faculties perfect rest. Besides, there is a great deal of exercise in walking round the table or making the strokes in pursuit of the game. Lord Palmerston played billiards for amusement as well as exercise, his best strokes being characteristically the winning hazards. Mozart's only amusement was billiards, being an exercise accessible at all hours and in all weathers. Attwood, the English musician, while placed under Mozart, said that he was always more ready to play a game with him than to give him a lesson.

Milton's amusement was music. "In the intervals of his pain," says Johnson, "he used to swing in his chair, and sometimes played upon an organ." Alfieri also found the greatest solace and inspiration in music. "Nothing," said he, "so moves my heart and soul and intellect, and rouses my very faculties like music, and especially the music of woman's voice. Almost all my tragedies have been conceived under the immediate emotion caused by music." Jeremy Bentham, who occupied Milton's house, had the same love of music. He set up an organ in his house,[1] and had a piano in almost every room. Almost his only exercise was taken in his little garden, in which he might be seen trotting along—his white worsted stockings drawn over his breeches knees—taking his "ante-prandial circumgyrations." Bentham was also fond of cats, chief of whom was Langbourne, whom he boasted that he had made a man of, first knighting him, and in advanced years putting him into the church as "the Rev. Dr. John Langbourne."

Crebillon was also a great lover of cats as well as dogs, whose attachment he said consoled him for man's ingratitude. One day, notwithstanding his poverty, he brought home with him a fresh dog under each arm. His wife

[1] "I have just been ruining myself by two pieces of extravagance, an organ that is to cost £230—is half as large, or twice as large again as the other—goes up to the ceiling and down to the floor of my workshop, giving birth to an abyss, in which my music-stool is lodged; looking like an elephant or a rhinoceros, and projecting in such sort that, between that and the book carrocio, there is no getting the dinner tray on the little table without a battle. Then there is warming apparatus by steam, including bath, in my bedroom. . . . The pretext for the warming by steam, inconvenience from the burnt air by the former mode; pretext for the organ, impossibility of keeping myself awake after dinner by any other means; consequence, premature sleep, to the prejudice of proper ditto."—Letter in Bowring's *Memoirs of Bentham*, p. 541.

observed to him that there were already eight dogs and fifteen cats in the house, and that she was at a loss how and with what to prepare his dinner. Helvetius, author of *L'Esprit*, was another admirer of cats, of whom he had about twenty, feeding and lodging them in the most delicate manner; and the sybarites were dressed in silk, satin, and velvet, with trains which they dragged behind them with the dignity of counsellors of parliament. Again, Saint Evremond was partial to ducks and other fowls, which he kept with him in his chamber, and fed incessantly. He used to say that "When we grow old and our own spirits decay it reanimates one to have a number of living creatures about one, and to be much with them."[1]

Lord Erskine, like Sir Walter Scott, had a passion for dogs. He had always several to whom he was much attached. One he used to have constantly with him when at the bar and at all his consultations, and another which he rescued while Lord-Chancellor from some boys who were about to kill him under pretence of his being mad. He had also a favourite goose which followed him about his grounds, a favourite mackaw, and even two favourite leeches. These he called after Home and Cline. The surgeons had saved his life, and he himself every day gave the leeches fresh water, declaring that they both knew him and were grateful.[2]

Lord Byron had a sort of mania for animals. At Cambridge he kept bulldogs and a bear; and when Shelley visited him at Ravenna he found the noble poet's house filled with beasts and birds. "Lord Byron's establishment," he said, in a letter to Mr. Peacock, "consists, besides servants, of ten horses, eight enormous dogs, three monkeys, five cats, an eagle, a crow, and a falcon; and all these, except the horses, walk about the house, which every now

[1] Pope in *Spence's Anecdotes*, p. 135. [2] Romilly's *Autobiography*.

and then resounds with their unarbitrated quarrels as if they were masters of it." In a postscript to the letter Shelley adds: "I find that my enumeration of the animals in this Circæan palace was defective, and that in a material point. I have just met on the grand staircase five peacocks, two Guinea hens, and an Egyptian crane!"

Among other strange attachments may be mentioned those of Rembrandt for his monkey, the death of which caused him so much grief; of Richter for his squirrels; of Latude for his rats; of Goethe for his snake; of Cowper for his hares; and of Pellisson for his spider. Some pet animals have been associated with great historic names, such as the vulture of Semiramis, the butterfly of Virgil, the starling of Nero, the serpent of Tiberius, the quail of Augustus, the hen of Honorius, the ape of Commodus, the sparrow of Heliogabalus, and the dove of Mahomet.

Some of the most eminent men have taken delight in the society of children. Richter said that the man is to be shunned who does not love the society of children. Cato, the censor, no matter how urgent the business of the republic, would never leave his house in the morning without having seen his wife wash and dress the baby. Cicero, after having put the finishing touch to his orations, would call in his children and have a romp with them. Sydney Smith says: "The haunts of happiness are varied, and rather unaccountable; but I have more often seen her among little children, home firesides, and country houses than anywhere else."

Who would have thought that the dignified and stately William Pitt should have found his greatest recreation in the society of children? His apparently cold and haughty manner then entirely vanished. The late Sir William Napier, when a boy, enjoyed a game of romps with Pitt at the house

of Lady Hester Stanhope. He has described the visit, which took place two years before the statesman's death: "Pitt," he said, "liked practical fun, and used to riot in it with Lady Hester, Charles and James Stanhope, and myself. One instance is worth noting. We were resolved to blacken his face with burnt cork, which he most strenuously resisted; but at the beginning of the fray a servant announced that Lords Castlereagh and Liverpool desired to see him on business. 'Let them wait in the other room,' was the answer, and the great minister instantly turned to the battle, catching up a cushion and belabouring us with it in glorious fun. We were, however, too many and strong for him, and, after at least a ten minutes' fight, got him down, and were actually daubing his face, when, with a look of pretended confidence in his prowess, he said: 'Stop: this will do. I could easily beat you all, but we must not keep these grandees waiting any longer.' His defeat was, however, palpable; and we were obliged to get a towel and basin of water to wash him clean before he could receive the grandees. Being thus put in order, the basin was hid behind the sofa, and the two lords were ushered in." After the ministers had been received and consulted with they left; and the cushion fight with the children was again recommenced. A man's manner and habits are perhaps the best evidences of his real character. Pitt's love of children affords a new view of his inner self. The above circumstance would have been less remarkable in the case of a father; but Pitt remained a solitary bachelor to the end of his life.

Leibnitz's principal amusement was with children, whom he assembled in his study to watch; he also took part in their gambols. Seated in his easy chair, he delighted to observe their lively movements, to listen to their conversation, and to observe their several dispositions; and when

he had sufficiently enjoyed the innocent spectacle, he dismissed the children with sweetmeats, and returned to his studies with redoubled energy.

Racine entered heartily into the amusements of his children. Once, when the Duc de Condé invited the poet to dine with a distinguished party at his palace, Racine's excuse was, that he had been absent from his family for a week, and had just accepted an invitation from his children to feast upon a carp which they had caught in his absence, and intended to keep until his return. I remember a procession we once had," said Louis Racine, in a memoir of his father, "in which my sisters played the part of the clergy, I enacted the curate, and the author of *Athalie* singing in chorus with us, acted as crucifier, and carried the cross."

Rousseau confessed that nothing gave him greater pleasure than to witness the joyous sports of children. "I have often," he said, "stopped in the streets to watch their frolics and sports, with an interest which I see no other person take in them." Yet what inconceivable inconsistency! Rousseau sent his own children to a foundling hospital, and never owned them!

Both Napoleon and Wellington were exceedingly fond of children. Napoleon would take the infant king of Rome in his arms, and standing in front of a mirror, make the oddest grimaces in the glass. At breakfast he would take the child upon his knee, dip his fingers in the sauce, and daub his face with it; the child's governess scolded, the emperor laughed, and the child, always pleased, seemed to take delight in the rough caresses of his father.

Wellington was a general favourite with children. He took part in their gambols, and was constantly presenting them with little presents and keepsakes. One of Napoleon's

favourite games was Blind Man's Buff, a game which Canning and Sir William Scott played with the Princess Caroline while at Montagu House.

Bayle's great delight was in witnessing the performance of Punchinello. He no sooner heard the magician's squeak than he left his books, rushed into the street, and did not mind standing in a shower of rain to witness the performance. Curran, the Irish orator, Charles Lamb, and Douglas Jerrold, were among the many admirers of Punch. Bayle took pleasure in following jugglers and vaulters, and seeing them perform their exhibitions in the street. Tasso enjoyed masquerades, and the diversions of the populace in the public festivals. Macchiavelli found relaxation in killing thrushes by netting them, getting up before daylight for the purpose. He sometimes frequented the roadside public-house, where he played tric-trac with a butcher, a miller, and a man who worked a lime kiln.

For those who want recreation, and a rest from the anxieties of life, it is a great thing to have a hobby. A man should have some pursuits which may be always in his power, and to which he may turn gladly in his hours of rest. The chief secret of comfort is in prudently cultivating an undergrowth of small pleasures, since few great ones are to be had on long leases. Many run after felicity, says Conversation Sharpe, like an absent man hunting for his hat while it is on his head, or in his hand. It is perhaps one of the necessities of human nature, that a man should have one absorbing, engrossing pursuit, to divert his mind from the trials and troubles that surround him in practical life. But small pleasures are not to be neglected ; and it is for this reason that hobbies, provided they do not become morbid, are so useful.

Days come and go much more pleasantly when one's

time is fully occupied. When spare moments do occur, it is very agreeable to have some pursuit of our own choosing to go on with. Industry is delightful to the honest worker; and while we escape uncongenial toil, it is well to devote ourselves to that which is congenial. The profit of industry may even be combined with the pleasures of pastime. Archæology was the hobby of Dr. Schliemann. After a youth-hood spent amidst privation and manual labours, he accumulated wealth, and in his love of Homer, he devoted himself to solve a question which others with greater powers than his had declined to investigate. The result of his archæological labours, which were conducted with the greatest patience and energy, has been rewarded with a large measure of success.

But a still more beneficial result of pursuing a hobby during leisure hours was that accomplished by Charles Wheatstone, in the development of the electric telegraph. He was originally a maker and seller of musical instruments; and it was to improve himself in his art that he investigated the science of sound theoretically and practically. This led him on to other branches of natural philosophy, and he devoted his leisure hours to making some toys to illustrate the subject of electricity. Mr. S. C. Hall, in his *Retrospect of a Long Life*, says: "One evening when I was present, there came to the house of John Martin, the painter, a young man who greatly amused the party by making a doll dance upon the grand piano, and he excited a laugh when he said: 'You will be surprised if I tell you that it is done by lightning?' It was Mr. Charles Wheatstone, afterwards Sir Charles Wheatstone, F.R.S. In that doll, perhaps, the first suggestion of the electric telegraph lay hidden—the germ of a discovery that has belted the globe with an electric zone of a thousandfold more marvellous character than

that which Puck promised to put about the earth in forty minutes."

See what a hobby Niépce cultivated, though he did not live fully to develop it. He was a lieutenant in the first regiment of French dragoons, when, in his leisure moments, he began the study of chemistry, which eventually led him to the discovery of photography. This shows that no position, however adverse, can hinder a man from improving himself in his leisure moments. Even Maupertuis, when acting as captain of dragoons, carried on the study of mathematics, in which he eventually acquired so much celebrity. Picard also studied astronomy, and laid the foundations of his fame, while acting as gardener to the Duc de Créqui.

Mr. Haden, while occupied as a surgeon in large practice in the west end of London, carried on the hobby of etching. He eventually acquired the greatest proficiency, and his pastime became his profit. He etched on the plate, directly from nature, and his works are full of power and beauty. The French critic, M. Burty, shows his appreciative spirit in the manner in which he has laboured to establish the reputation of an artist so thoroughly English as Mr. Haden. That work of this quality should have been turned out by a surgeon in large practice is certainly very astonishing, but it ought also to be encouraging to other amateurs, who, like himself, though in minor degrees, are endowed with the fairy gifts of artistic insight and feeling.

Mr. Lassell, an eminent brewer of Liverpool, turned from malt to astronomy. He made a magnificent telescope, which his relatives have since his death presented to the nation ; and it is now to be seen at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. With this instrument he discovered no less than six hundred new nebulæ. He had already disoovered the

ninth star in Orion, the satellite of Neptune, the eighth satellite of Saturn, and two additional satellites of Uranus.

Another eminent astronomer, who turned from engineering to the contemplation of the heavens, is Mr. James Nasmyth, whose work on the Moon has been admired by all who have read it and studied its wonderful illustrations. Inventing had been the pursuit of James Watt's entire life, and in old age it became his hobby. "Without a hobby-horse," he said, "what is life?" He had ample resources in himself, and found pleasure in quiet meditation as well as in active work. His thirst for knowledge was still unslaked; and he proceeded with his experiments upon air, light, and electricity. Dr. Johnson at seventy, said: "It is a man's own fault, it is for want of use, if his mind grows torpid in old age."

The famous Helmholtz dated his start in science to an attack of typhoid fever. His illness led him to obtain a microscope, which he was enabled to purchase, he says, "by having spent my autumn vacation in the hospital, prostrated by typhoid fever. Being a pupil, I was nursed without expense, and on my recovery I found myself in possession of the savings of my small resources." What Helmholtz has since done with his microscope may be found in the records of science.

Lindley Murray owed his fame to an accident. He was seized by an illness which confined him to his room, and disabled him from active occupation. He took to the reading of books, and eventually became a successful author. David Allan, the "Scottish Hogarth," as he has been called, burnt his foot, and having nothing else to do, amused himself with drawing on the floor with a piece of chalk. When he returned to school he continued the art. But he went so far as to draw a caricature of his schoolmaster punishing

a pupil; and the drawing having been brought under the master's eye, Allan was summarily expelled. But the caricature having been shown to the collector of customs at Alloa,—where Allan's father was shore-master,—the collector sent the boy to Glasgow for the purpose of studying art; and from that time his success was decided.

The love of knowledge, and even of apparently useless knowledge, is one of the best preservations against the vulgarity and selfishness of the world. The Gospel has mentioned idleness as almost the climax of sin: "And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idlers, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." It is better even to have a useless hobby than to be a tittle-tattler and a busybody. Blessed is the man, says Lord Brougham, who has a hobby-horse; and he himself had many. "Every man has his hobby-horse," said William Hutton, "and it is no disgrace prudently to ride him. He is the prudent man who can introduce cheap pleasure without impeding business."

Some men have a hobby for books, which, perhaps, they do not read: they look to their rarity, their binding, or their age. Another's hobby is for pictures—rare, sometimes worthless, old art. The hobby of another is for autographs; and birthday books have become the rage, or old letters of distinguished men, which sell for ridiculous sums. The hobby of others is for music. Indeed, the hobby of some men is often their best friend; excepting the man whose hobby is a pet grievance. Generally speaking, the hobby keeps one in humour and good health, and is the one unchanging companion in declining days.

Some may, however, have ridiculous hobbies. Thus, Charles V., in his self-imposed retirement, amused himself

with constantly winding up a number of watches, and was surprised to find that no two of them went alike. It is the same in most minds: they cannot go together. Hence allowance must be made for diversities of views, opinions, and decisions. The late Sam Rogers used to tell of a nervous gentleman whose hobby was fire-escapes. The invention was a kind of sack in which the man could lower himself at once from his window. Being suddenly awakened one night by the sound, as he thought, of the wheels of a fire-engine, followed by a tremendous knocking at the door, he descended in his sack in great haste, and reached the street just in time to hand his wife, who had been to the opera, out of her carriage!

In concluding this chapter on health and recreation, it may not be unimportant to add that the uniform testimony of brain-workers is in favour of moderation and temperance in all things—in study, exercise, eating, drinking, and even recreation. "Nature," said Lord Bacon, "is best to be conquered by obeying her;" and moderation is a law of nature—the *aurea mediocritas* of Horace, which Hume says is the best thing on earth; it makes life enjoyable, and therefore tends to its prolongation.

It was a maxim of the ancients that temperance is the nursing mother of genius. The stomach, we have said, has been styled the father of the family, and is often fatally perilled by over-indulgence. It might with truth be said that far more are destroyed by over-feeding than by want of food. As a rule, brain-workers eat too much rather than too little; and overloading the stomach certainly tends to the deterioration of the brain.[1] "Jamais homme ay-

[1] Sydney Smith, writing to Lord Murray, said playfully: "If you wish for anything like happiness in the fifth act of life, eat and drink about one-half of what you *could* eat and drink. Did I ever tell you

mant sa gorge et son ventre," said Scarron, "ne fist belle œuvre."

Temperance was one of the cardinal virtues of Plato. Socrates was a spare eater, and never willingly drank much. Cicero and Plutarch have both left their testimony in favour of moderate living and vegetable diet. Julius Cæsar was originally of a fragile and delicate constitution, but moderate living and abundant exercise hardened his health, and enabled him to endure the greatest toil and fatigue.

"Be watchful of thy body," said Descartes, "if you would rightly exercise thy mind." The vital force of both must be preserved, in order to prolong their healthy working power. Though Newton and Kant were alike feeble in frame, they both lived to old age by temperance and moderation. Fontenelle held the highest rank in letters and science for fifty years, and lived to a hundred. The secret of his longevity, notwithstanding his original feebleness of constitution, was his extreme temperance and his careful economy of living. When he was about to die, he said: "I do not suffer, my friends; I only feel a certain difficulty of living." With him, death was like going to sleep after a long journey; or like a pendulum that ceases to oscillate. Fontenelle's practice was to eat moderately, or not at all, unless nature demanded food; to abstain from

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my calculation about eating and drinking? Having ascertained the weight of what I could live upon so as to preserve health and strength, and what I did live upon. I found that between ten and seventy years of age, I had eaten and drunk forty horse-waggon loads of meat and drink more than would have preserved me in life and health! The value of this mass of nourishment I considered to be worth seven thousand pounds sterling. It occurred to me that I must by my voracity have starved to death nearly a hundred persons! This is a frightful calculation, but irresistibly true; and I think, dear Murray, *your* waggons would require an additional horse each!"—*Memoir and Letters of Sydney Smith*, ii. p. 503.

study, when study was irksome; to pass no day without some work, but never to work in excess; and finally, to be always cheerful; for "without cheerfulness," said he, "what is philosophy worth?"

Voltaire always declared that it was regimen that kept him alive. He was naturally of a feeble frame; he was bilious and dyspeptic; in his youth he suffered from scurvy; he was nearly carried off by smallpox; and in his later life, he was afflicted by turns with rheumatic gout, erysipelas, colic, and opthalmia. Yet, by temperate living and careful regimen, he contrived to outlive nearly all his contemporaries.[1]

Michael Angelo preserved his working power by great temperance and continence of living. A little bread and wine was all that he required during the chief part of the day, while he was employed upon his work; but he carefully avoided working so as to fatigue himself. Buffon was distinguished by his sobriety and moderation of living; but he was regular in his meals to a minute. His breakfast consisted of a piece of bread and a little wine and water. At dinner he ate little, preferring fish, which was followed by a liberal dessert of fruit. Towards the close of his life he adopted a still sparer regimen. His dinner, shortly after mid-day, consisted of some soup and two fresh boiled eggs. He drank little wine and no coffee nor liqueurs. After dinner, he took a few minutes' repose, then a walk in the park, or along the terrace of the chateau. At five he betook himself to his desk, and remained there until nine, after

[1] He once said to his niece, Madame de Fontaine, who was an excellent painter: "Quand vous voudrez peindre un vieux malade emmitouflé, avec une plume dans une main et de la rhubarbe dans l'autre, entre un médicine et un secrétaire, avec des livrès et une seringue, donnez moi le préférence."

which he participated in the lively conversation of the family circle.

Kant, we have said, was originally of a feeble frame, but by temperance and frugality he lived to an old age. One of his biographers says that his regimen was as regular and punctual as the cathedral clock. His minute precautions, his studied precision as to meat, drink, dress, rising and going to bed, were the subjects of ridicule to many; yet he prolonged his life for nearly a century, and left behind him works of power, which are the glory of his nation.

Dr. Adam Ferguson, the historian of Rome, had an attack of paralysis—the result of over brain-work—which, Lord Cockburn says, "ought to have killed him in his fiftieth year"; but rigid discipline enabled him to live uncrippled, either in body or mind, for nearly fifty years longer. He gave up the use of wine and animal food, subsisting entirely on milk and vegetables.[1] When in his seventy-second year he set out on a journey to Rome (then a much more laborious journey than now), for the purpose of collecting fresh materials for a new edition of his *History;* and he returned home after about a year, looking younger than ever. Auber, the veteran musician, when congratulated, at the age of eighty-seven, on his remarkable vigour, said: "They never so often told me I was young as since I have grown old."

Baron Maseres, who lived to ninety, was very sparing in his diet; and, besides, fasted one day in every week, taking no dinner, and only a round of dry toast to tea. A celebrated physician asked an old man, remarkable for his

[1] Lord Cockburn, in the *Memorials of his Time*, says: "I never heard of his dining out, except at his relation, Dr. Joseph Black's, where his son, Sir Adam (the friend of Scott), used to say it was delightful to see the two philosophers rioting over a boiled turnip!"

health, what regimen he followed. His answer was: "I take only one meal a day." "Keep your secret," replied the physician; "if it were known and followed our profession would be ruined."

Temperance was the rule of life of William Hutton of Birmingham, though he occasionally partook of a glass of beer. But in his eighty-first year he gave that up to avoid attacks of gravel. He confined himself to milk, and had no more attacks. John Wesley was one of the most abstemious of men, though one of the hardest of workers. He habitually abstained from wine, beer, and spirits; and for years together he never tasted animal food, even while travelling from four to five thousand miles yearly. He himself attributed his health and his prolonged working life to regular habits, temperance, exercise, and cheerfulness. "I feel and grieve," he would say; "but by the grace of God, I *fret* at nothing."

We have already mentioned the case of General Perronet Thompson, who gave up wine, beer, spirits, and animal food, to get rid of his hereditary disease of gout, in which he completely succeeded. Sir Charles Napier, the hero of Meanee, abstained habitually from wine and fermented liquor, and at times restricted himself entirely to vegetable diet. To this habitual temperance he himself attributed his energy and working power. We have also been informed that Professor Francis Newman found total abstinence from flesh-meat the only remedy for an inveterate dyspepia with which he had been long afflicted.

Dr. Cheyne, the celebrated physician, wrote a work on the Spleen and the Vapours, which he entitled *The English Malady*. He was led to the study of the subject by his own tendency to corpulency. He weighed not less than thirty-two stone, and was, besides, "short-breathed, lethargic, and listless." After trying a variety of treatment with no

benefit, he at length confined himself to milk, bread, seeds of different kinds, mealy roots, and fruit; and finally recovered his health, activity, and cheerfulness. Howard, the philanthropist, was equally abstemious, eating no flesh and drinking no wine. When asked how he had preserved his health and escaped infection from gaol fever and the diseases by which he was surrounded, he replied: "Next to the free goodness and mercy of the Author of my being, temperance and cleanliness have been my preservatives."

At the same time it must be acknowledged that the healthy constitution bears stimulants, and the weak constitution often requires them. By the power of habit, things noxious become innocuous and even necessary. Once, when the saying "Habit is second nature," was quoted to the Duke of Wellington, he replied: "Second nature? Why, habit is ten times nature." The maxim, *sanis omnia sana*, is perhaps the best that can be followed; and healthy men may and do eat flesh-meat, and drink wine and beer in moderation, to as ripe an age as any teetotaller or vegetarian.

When Cyrus Redding, at the age of eighty-five, was asked how he had enjoyed such perfect health, he replied: "I have always drunk good wine, and plenty of it." But when cross-questioned, it turned out after all that the "plenty" meant "moderation," accompanied by regular and active exercise. Sydney Smith, with his accustomed good sense, hit the mark when he said: "The common rules are best; exercise without fatigue; generous living without excess; early rising and moderation in sleeping. These are the apothegms of old women; but if they are not attended to, happiness becomes so extremely difficult that very few persons can attain to it."

To these illustrations of the healthy old age of brain-

workers may be added that of the celebrated rifle-shooter and deer-stalker, Captain Horatio Ross, who thus accounted, in *Sportscrapiana*, for the preservation of his remarkably fine physique. "I attribute it," he said, "in a great measure to having always kept myself in a state of moderate training. I have always lived well, and for many years have drunk nothing but light claret, one bottle per diem; but I have never omitted, wherever I was, whether in town or country, whether the weather was fair or the reverse, to walk regularly eight miles, and generally twelve miles, every day of my life, unless I had an opportunity of going out shooting. I have also, for a great many years, been very particular in taking a sponging bath of cold water every morning." And now, at sixty-eight—an age when most men are verging towards "second childhood"—he can walk his fifty miles, at three and a half miles an hour, without fatigue.

Even with respect to early rising, on which Franklin, Wesley, Sydney Smith, and others, placed such reliance, there are considerable differences of opinion. Some old men find it exhausting instead of refreshing, and consider that it takes too much out of them at the beginning of the day. We have seen that Dr. Fowler, of Salisbury, who lived to ninety-two, held that it was essential to long life that you should "lie abed in the morning until you are done enough." Many contend that old age is the period of repose, and that work should be avoided. But to a man whose life has been spent in active pursuits, idleness is irksome. The retired tallow-chandler, who "went back on melting days," applies to many conditions of life. How often do we see men withdraw from active life, only to sink into despondency and drop suddenly into the grave.

That brain-work in moderation is not prejudicial to life—that it is on the whole favourable to longevity—is proved by

the great ages to which some of our most eminent statesmen, lawyers, naturalists, and philosophers have attained. "Subtil, and acute, and eager inquisition shorten life," says Bacon, "for it tireth the spirit and wasteth it;" but "admiration and light contemplation are very powerful to the prolonging of life, for they hold the spirits in such things as delight them, and suffer them not to tumultuate or to carry themselves unquietly, and waywardly."[1]

Natural philosophers for the most part enjoy long lives. The pursuit of truth is pleasurable, and promotes the serenity of the mind. "If I could conceive," said Bossuet, "a nature purely intelligent, it seems to me that I should devote it only to know and love truth, and that that only would render it happy." The search after truth, laborious and difficult though it may be, is always full of enjoyment. Moreover, its tendency is to raise men above grovelling indulgence in the pleasures of the senses.

Hufeland, in his *Art of Prolonging Life*, says: "Deep-thinking philosophers have at all times been distinguished by their great age, especially when their philosophy was occupied in the study of Nature, and afforded them the divine pleasure of discovering new and important truths; the purest enjoyment, or beneficial exaltation of ourselves, a kind of restoration which may be ranked among the principal means of prolonging the life of a perfect being." Thus, among the philosophers who have lived to between seventy and eighty, we find the names of Roger Bacon, Galileo, Leibnitz, Euler, Dalton, Linnæus, Priestley,[2] Cavendish,

[1] Bacon, *History of Life and Death.*

[2] Priestley began life with a feeble frame, and ended a hearty old age at seventy-one. At fifty-four, he said: "So far from suffering from application to study, I have found my health steadily improve from the age of eighteen to the present time."

Haller, Reumar, Van Sweeten, Jenner, Fallopius, Galen, and Spallanzani; among those who have lived to between eighty and ninety, were Newton, Franklin, Buffon, Halley, Herschel, Young, Watt, Simson, Harvey, Duhamel, Astruc, Pinel, Morgagni, and Sir David Brewster; and among those who have lived to ninety and upwards, were Wren, Lewenhoek, Humboldt, Heberden, Reysch, and Fontenelle. Theodore de Beza lived to eighty-six, and his health was so perfect that he declared he had never known what it was to have a headache. Arnauld lived to eighty-three, reading and writing to the last without the aid of glasses. Dr. Mollison, when citing the names of the most celebrated long-lived men, said: "I have sought to add to my list of octogenarians any persons of vicious character, but I have not been able to find one." Thus length of years and sobriety of living are the complements of each other.

The proportion of poets and literary men who have lived to a great age, is not so great as in the case of philosophers: yet many have exceeded threescore and ten. Montfaucon survived to eighty-seven, and nearly to the end of his life he spent eight hours daily in study. Goethe studied and wrote until nearly eighty-four; Corneille lived to seventy-eight, and Wieland to eighty. The laborious John Britton went on studying topography and antiquities until he was eighty-six; and Isaac D'Israeli lived and worked amongst his books until he was eighty-two—cheerful and hopeful to the last. The joyous mind is usually a strong mind, and cheerfulness is not only a sign of health, but one of its most potent preservers.

For nearly half a century, Jeremy Bentham devoted eight, and sometimes ten or twelve hours a day to study, and his health and cheerfulness were proverbial. Hazlitt said of him, that his appearance presented a singular mixture

of boyish simplicity and the venerableness of age. When over eighty he wrote to Chamberlain Clark: "We are both alive, I turned of eighty, you a little short of ninety. How little could we have expected any such thing when we were scraping together at O. S. S. House two parts out of the three in a trio, and amusing ourselves with 'The Church,' and 'Monkey Dogs.' I am living surrounded with young men, and merrier than most of them. I have lost but little of the very little strength I had when young, but do not expect to reach your age."[1]

Leigh Hunt was another Old Boy who carried his cheerfulness to the verge of extreme old age; indeed, he was an Old Boy to the last. He used to remark that boys about town nowadays exhaust the enjoyments of life so early, that nothing remains to them in manhood and old age but ennui and regrets, and that there would soon be nothing but old boys left. And there are Old Girls too. Take the following "delicious memorandum," as Leigh Hunt calls it, from Mrs. Inchbald's *Diary*: "One Sunday I dined, drank tea, and supped with Mrs. Whitfield. At dark, she and I, and her son William, walked out, and I rapped at the doors in New Street, and ran away." This was in 1788, when Miss Inchbald was thirty-five. What would the tenants have thought if they had been told that the runaway knocks had been given by one of the most respectable women of the day—the authoress of the *Simple Story*? "But," says Leigh Hunt, "such people never grow old."

The instances of old statesmen are very numerous. Men of eager and impetuous nature may be consumed by the fret and fever of political life, but those of staid and patient temperament grow stronger by the stimulus of debate. The

[1] Dr. Bowring, *Memoirs of Bentham*, p. 605. Bentham lived to eighty-four.

interest they take in the life of others seems to preserve their own. Of Wellington, the latter part of whose life was political, it was said that he had exhausted nature as he had exhausted glory. His contemporaries, Talleyrand, Metternich, and Nesselrode, all lived to be old men. Of aged statesmen of late years may be mentioned Lansdowne, Brougham, Lyndhurst, Palmerston, and Gladstone.

The age to which lawyers, and especially judges, have survived, is extraordinary. Coke lived to eighty-four; Mansfield to eighty-eight; Eldon to eighty-nine, and Stowell to ninety-one. Judge Lefroy was forced to leave the Irish Bench because of his old age, though his mind was in full vigour, and he lived to ninety-three. Probably the health of lawyers is in some measure attributable to their long and entire rest between terms. They then go grouse-shooting, or enjoy the pleasures of a country life. Some of them have been temperate, others not. Brougham, Lyndhurst, and Eldon, were free livers. Eldon would drink his two bottles of port at a sitting in his eighty-seventh year.

Henry Taylor observed that "a statesman, if he would live long,—which to do is a part of his duty, granting him fitted to render good service to the state,—must pay a jealous and watchful attention to his diet. A patient in the fever ward of an hospital scarcely requires to be more carefully regulated in this particular."[1] The observation is no doubt generally true; yet strength and habit will enable some men to do with impunity, what would occasion disturbance and ill health to others of weaker constitution.

[1] Henry Taylor, *The Statesman*, p. 230.

CHAPTER VIII

TOWN AND COUNTRY LIFE

God was palpably present in the Country, and the Devil had gone with the World to Town.—HARDY, *Far from the Madding Crowd.*

Life in the country and among a less school-taught class is full of practical teachings which richer folk are apt sedulously to deny their children.—*A Sussex Idyl.*

On the whole, great cities tend to *loosen*, and in extreme case to destroy, the feeling of home, and build the household of lust on the ruins. Such cities have an organised trades-union of crime.—*Fortnightly Review*, October 1886.

Whilst this hard truth I teach, methinks I see
The monster London laugh at me;
I should at thee too, foolish city,
If it were fit to laugh at misery:
But thy estate I pity.—ABRAHAM COWLEY.

If the question was, eternal company, without the power of retiring within yourself, or solitary confinement for life,—I should say, "Turnkey, lock the cell."—
SIR WALTER SCOTT'S *Diary.*

GREAT towns do not necessarily produce great men. On the contrary, the tendency of life and pursuits in great towns is rather to produce small men. The whirl of business and pleasure which pervades the life of cities distracts the mind and hinders its growth. There is a constant succession of new excitements, producing no permanent impression, because one effaces the other. While the country boy is allowed to grow up, the city boy is rushed up. The latter is sharp and clever in his way, by perpetual friction with his fellows, and when he becomes quick and

alert in his special business, he stops there and goes no further.

City life is a foe to intellectual work. There is too much excitement and too little repose. When the newspaper is read, and the business is done, and the play is seen, the work of the day is over. The young Londoner makes few friends; and if he makes them, they are like himself. The late Dr. Guthrie, while in London, mixed much with city as well as country-bred young men. He said in his *Autobiography*: 'It was then that I first saw the narrow limits and defects of the ordinary education of English schools. The city lads were, I doubt not, thorough masters of their own particular department of business; but, beyond the small hole they filled—like certain shell-fish in the sea-rocks—they were amazingly ignorant of everything outside." Carlyle, in his rather contemptuous way, said of the Londoners: "All London born men, without exception, seem to me narrow built, considerably perverted men, rather fractions of men."

Nearly all the great men of England, as well as of London, have been country born and country bred. It is easy to understand this. In cities a young man is but one of a multitude; his neighbours know nothing of him, and he knows nothing of them. He sees what he has always seen, and, provided his pleasures and wants are satisfied, he receives but little impulse towards further improvement. It is altogether different with the young man born in the country, who comes, as it were, fresh from his mother earth. There he is more of an individual; he is also more responsible to those about him. He is accustomed to do many things for himself that are done for city boys by the accurate machinery of town life. He is not distracted by diversity of excitement. He has time to

grow. He knows his neighbours, and they know him. He forms friendships, which often last for life: and it is more important to a young man to make one good friend than a dozen indifferent acquaintances. He comes into more direct contact with his fellows, and his mind reacts upon theirs. The impressions then made upon him grow, and if the soil be good, they will become fertile elements of character. "There is a country accent," said La Rochefoucauld, "not in speech only, but in thought, conduct, character, and manner of existing, which never forsakes a man."

Though the objects presented to the mind of the country boy are less numerous, they are better observed, partly because they are more attractive, and partly because they do not hurry past him with a celerity which confuses his memory and deadens his interest. He knows nature as well as men. In a country town, or in a village or hamlet, everybody knows everybody. Boys hear of the deeds or misdeeds of their neighbours. They know much about family history, talk about it at the fireside, and take an early interest in spoken biography. It may be said, indeed, that such biography is of the nature of gossip, but gossip at least indicates an interest in others; and wherever there is gossip, there is also its counterpart—friendship. In large cities, on the contrary, where men live in crowds, there is no gossip and little friendship, because they know little of each other, and care less. Thus men live at a much greater social distance from each other in cities than in the country.

Though the country boy is much slower in arriving at maturity than the town boy, he is usually much greater when he reaches it. He is left more to his own resources, and is accustomed to do many things for himself, thus

learning the essential lesson of self-help. When he arrives in town, his faculties of wonder and admiration are excited; he feels himself in a new sphere, entertains new ambitions, which he endeavours to gratify; and by will and purpose he often rises to the highest stations in city life. Thus the country boy succeeds better than the born Londoner. As the late Walter Bagehot said: "Huge centres of intellectual and political life are said to be unproductive, and it may be that the feverish excitement which exhausts the parents' strength, and in which the youth of the offspring is spent, leaves but little vigour and creative power in the genuine cockney. At any rate, there are few men great either in politics, science, or art, who have sprang from the exhausted soil of a metropolis."

Country boys are, indeed, the best sort of agricultural produce, doing their fair share of the intellectual work of the world. Fontenelle said that it was to the advantage of scientific men to have had leisure to lay a good foundation in the repose of a province. Goldwin Smith said of Pym, originally a country boy, that he lived six years in retirement —a part of training as necessary as action to the depth of character and the power of sustained thought, which are the elements of greatness. "All worthy things," said Jean Paul Richter, "are done in solitude—that is, without Society." What a great benefit it was for science that Newton was a country-bred boy, and employed during his early life in the management of his mother's small farm. In the *Lives of the Engineers*, it will be observed that the men who built our bridges, made our docks, canals, lighthouses, and railways, were all country-bred boys. Sir Hugh Myddelton, who made the New River to supply London with water, was born at Galch-hill, a remote country house near Denbigh, in North Wales. John Perry, who closed the breach at

Dagenham, belonged to Rodborough, in Gloucestershire; and John Metcalfe, the road-maker, belonged to Knaresborough, in Yorkshire. Edwards, the bridge-builder, was the son of a small farmer at Eglwysylam, in South Wales; and Brindley, the canal-maker, was the son of a labourer at Tunstead, in the north-east corner of Derbyshire. Smeaton was brought up in his father's country house at Austhorpe, near Leeds. Rennie was the son of a farmer in East Lothian; and Telford was born and brought up in a cot among the Eskdale moors; while George Stephenson, the son of an engine-tenter, first saw the light in a cottage at Wylam on the banks of the Tyne. But genius is of no locality nor lineage, and springs alike from the farmhouse, the peasant's hut, or the herd's sheiling.

It might naturally be expected that the country-bred boy might distinguish himself in natural history, for his life is identified with outdoor existence. He sees and observes; learns the habits of birds, bees, insects, and animals. That wonderful book, the *Natural History of Selborne*, was the result of the close observation of one man amidst the silent influences of nature. All his life was spent in the country. Professor Henslow, while but a child near Rochester, dragged home a fungus almost as big as himself, and was constantly employed with models of caterpillars, drawings of insects, and dissections of birds and animals, for his special and instructive amusement. Such men as these, though perfecting their work in the country, are often drawn by the fame of their works to terminate their lives in towns and cities. Buffon, however, to the last preferred to live in the midst of nature, in his country seat at Montbar, where his study is still to be seen situated on an elevated terrace at the farther end of his garden.

The men who have mainly influenced their age, and

stamped their minds upon their own and future generations, have for the most part been nursed in solitude.[1] Such were Wicliffe, Luther, Knox, Loyola, Latimer, and Wesley. Oliver Cromwell was occupied by rural pursuits until he was nearly forty; and Washington, born and bred in Virginia, on reaching manhood, was engaged for years in surveying the immense tracts of wild and unsettled lands in the valleys of the Alleghany mountains. That solitude is not an obstruction to culture, but, by throwing the mind inwards upon itself, may even become its stimulant, is shown by the significant fact that Alexander Murray, Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Edinburgh,—the Rev. John Brown, author of the *Self-Interpreting Bible*,—James Ferguson, the astronomer,—and James Hogg, author of *The Queen's Wake*,—were all in early life employed in the solitary occupation of herding sheep on the lonely moors of Scotland.

Sir Benjamin Brodie, in his solitary walks over the Wiltshire downs when a boy, found that he gained habits of reflection which more than counterbalanced the disadvantages of family seclusion. The desert, they say, is the place for discoveries. In the comparative solitude of the country, man is more observant, more self-contained, more ready to follow his perceptions of new truths. When Jenner had made his discovery of the power of vaccination in prevent-

[1] Lacordaire observes: "Solitude draws us together as much as a crowd separates us. This is why there is so little real intimacy in the world, whereas men who are accustomed to live in solitude dig their affections deep. I have never lived with people of the world, and it is with difficulty that I can put any faith in those who live in a sea where one wave presses against another without any of them acquiring consistency. The best of men are losers by this continual friction, which, while it rubs off the asperities of the soul, at the same time destroys its power of forming any strong attachment. I believe solitude is as necessary to friendship as it is to sanctity, to genius as to virtue."

ing small-pox at his native village in Gloucestershire, and after his fame had become European, a friend who visited him urged him to settle in London. But he loved the country too well, and declined to leave his native village. When the visitor asked to be shown the diamond ring which the Emperor of Russia had sent him, Jenner's reply was: "Come, instead, and let us take a stroll in the garden and hear the drowsy hum of the beetle." Jenner's *Signs of Rain* embodies a remarkable illustration of the closeness and accuracy of his observation on plants, flowers, birds, and animals, as affected by a change in weather, such as he never could have acquired in the city.

Dr. Arnold was a great lover of the country—of its trees, its hedgerows, its meadows, its lakes, and its mountains. When he removed from one house to another, he was careful to take with him shoots of the great willow tree from his father's grounds, and plant them successively at Laleham, Rugby, and Foxhow. His heartstrings grew about these places, which became for a time the centre of his world. He rejoiced to take a skirmish across country with his boys, feeling the fresh wind blow in his face, gathering wild-flowers, and finding birds' nests,—his mirth overflowing as he crossed fences and leaped ditches. But his greatest delight was in his Westmoreland home at Foxhow. "The place dwelt in his memory," he said, "as a vision of beauty from one vacation to another." He felt that he could never rest anywhere when travelling abroad: "If he stayed more than a day at the most beautiful spot in the world, it would only bring on a longing for Foxhow." The air of the mountains also gave him fresh power to work—always a passion with Arnold. "We have been here," he wrote to a friend, "for more than three weeks, and, as it always does, the place has breathed a constant refreshment on me,

although I have never worked harder, having done six of my lectures, besides a large correspondence." He fondly hoped that when he was dead his bones should go to Grasmere Churchyard, to lie under the yews which Wordsworth planted, with the river Rotha murmuring by. But it was otherwise ordered, and the remains of the great teacher more appropriately repose amidst the scenes of his noble labours at Rugby.

Wordsworth also lived near Foxhow, at Rydale, on the opposite side of Grasmere Lake; while Southey lived at Greta Hall, near the northern shore of Derwent Water. Southey disliked London. It hurried, worried, and wearied him. He had no repose while there, and even in the reading-room of the British Museum, his mind was perplexed by the very multitude of its resources, and the distraction of its enormous supplies. It might naturally be supposed that Sydney Smith, by his social qualities, and the affluence of his conversation, should be a man of the city rather than of the country. His friends looked upon him as a man in exile, during the years that he officiated as curate at a small village on Salisbury Plain, and afterwards as rector of Foxton-le-Clay, in Yorkshire. But it was a fortunate thing for the world of readers that Sydney Smith was under the necessity of spending so many years of his life in the solitude of the country. Otherwise, his great powers might have been frittered away amidst town coteries, in brilliant after-dinner table-talk,—in which case his honest, healthy, and thoroughly admirable writings might never have been given to the world.

At Foxton-le-Clay, Sydney Smith was at once parson, farmer, gardener, village doctor, justice of the peace, and Edinburgh Reviewer. Writing about his seclusion to his friend Jeffrey, he said: "Living a great deal alone (as I now

do) will, I believe, correct me of my faults; for a man can do without his own approbation in much society, but he must make great exertions to gain it when he is alone; without it, I am convinced, solitude is not to be endured." Sydney Smith had, however, much more to do at Foxton-le-Clay than writing articles for the "Edinburgh." With respect to his farming operations, one of his visitors writes as follows: "Not to lose time, he farms from his door with a tremendous speaking-trumpet, a proper companion for which machine is a telescope, slung in leather, to observe what his labourers and ploughmen are doing. . . . The same spirit prevails in his garden and farm; contrivance and singularity in every hole and corner." "What, in the name of wonder, is that skeleton sort of machine in the middle of your field?"—"Oh, that is my universal Scratcher—a framework so contrived that every animal, from a lamb to a bullock, can rub and scratch itself with the greatest facility and luxury." During the nineteen years that the Rev. Sydney Smith lived at Foxton-le-Clay, he wrote thirty-eight of his best articles for the *Edinburgh Review*. He wrote the last, on the Roman Catholic Claims, the year before he left, on his presentation to a canonry in Bristol Cathedral by Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst. He was afterwards promoted by Lord Grey to a canonry in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. From this time he was the delight of many circles; yet his mind often reverted to the happy, busy, useful life he had spent in his Yorkshire parsonage.

To the early solitude in which Carlyle's nature was nursed may be attributed much of the characteristic genius of his manhood. He was born in a solitary farmhouse in Dumfriesshire, and after undergoing the usual training of a country school, he went to Edinburgh and passed through a short curriculum there. He laid the foundations of a literary

life; learning, mostly on his own strength, to read fluently almost all cultivated languages, and on almost all subjects and sciences. From private teaching he proceeded to translation, and then to original writing. For about seven years after his marriage Carlyle lived at Craigenputtock, a lonely farmhouse amidst the moors of Nithsdale. Here it was that Emerson discovered him on his visit to England in 1833. On arriving at Dumfries, Emerson found that Craigenputtock was fifteen miles distant. "No public coach passed it," he says; "so I took a private carriage from the inn. I found the house amid solitary heathery hills, where the lonely scholar nourished his mighty heart. . . . Few were the objects and lonely the man, 'not a person to speak to within fifteen miles except the minister of Dunscore,' so that books inevitably became his topics. . . . He was already turning his attention towards London with a scholar's appreciation; 'London is the heart of the world,' he said, 'wonderful if only for its mass of human beings.'"[1] And London shortly afterwards absorbed him, but not until he had fed and shaped his mind amidst the "eternal silences" of his native hills.

M. de Lavergne, in his valuable work on *The Rural Economy of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, remarks that the English novels of the eighteenth century are full of the praises of a country life. "While France," he says, "was busy with the stories of Voltaire, and the romances of the younger Crébillon, England was reading *The Vicar of Wakefield*, *Tom Jones*, and *Clarissa*. Goldsmith, describing Mr. Primrose, says: "The hero of this piece unites in himself the three greatest characters on earth: he is a priest, a husbandman, and the father of a family." This sentence embraces a set of ideas peculiar to Protestant and agricultural

[1] Emerson, *English Traits*, chap. i.

England. The whole romance is only a commentary upon the topic; it is a picture of the interior of a poor clergyman's family.

In the same chapter M. de Lavergne endeavours to show that the love of a country life has always been a marked feature in the character of the English people, and that they inherit this taste from their Saxon and Norman ancestors. Upon the nations of Latin origin, the influence of Imperial Rome impressed a different character. There, a predilection for town life was early manifested. The Roman fields were left to the slaves; and all who aspired to distinction resorted to the city. The name of peasant, *villicus* (from which villain) or *paganus* (from which pagan) was a term of contempt; while the name of *urbanitas*, or the dweller in the city, was alone associated with elegance and politeness. The modern Latins still look upon the country as a sort of exile,—in France, in Italy, and Spain,—and they desire to live in the town or city, for pleasure, for society, for money-making, or, it may be, for intellectual enjoyment. The Englishman is less social than the people of Latin origin: he still retains something of his native temperament. He is willing to live in remote country places, in solitary farm-houses, where he enjoys the society of his wife and children; he has a repugnance, like the Saxon, to be shut up within the walls of towns, for the open air is his natural element.

While Goldsmith expressed his love of the country in his *Vicar of Wakefield*, *The Traveller*, and *The Deserted Village*, there are many others of our novelists and poets who have exhibited the same tendency. The novels of Fielding and Smollett, as well as those of George Eliot and Mrs. Gaskell, are full of the fresh breath of the country. Walter Scott was a country boy all over, in habits, speech, mind, and character. The first consciousness of existence came to him at his grand-

father's farmhouse at Sandyknowe; and there he spent many of his boyish years, imbibing that love of the country and country life, which never left him. It was at Kelso, on the Tweed, that he says: "I can distinctly trace the awakening of that delightful feeling for the beauties of natural objects that has never since deserted me." His love of the country—of the hills, the dales, and the moors—became his passion. "If I did not see the heather once a year," he said, "I think I should die." Of his country home at Abbotsford he said: "My heart clings to the place I have created; there is scarce a tree on it that does not owe its being to me." Scott's love of the country drew visitors to Scotland from all parts of the world, but especially from America. His *Lady of the Lake*, *Waverley*, *Rob Roy*, and other Scotch novels, had the effect of attracting continuous streams of tourists across the Border,—to Abbotsford, Loch Katrine, and Rob Roy's country, near the head of Loch Lomond. Scott's pen acted as a magician's wand; and called into existence stage-coaches, steam-boats, roads, railways, and innumerable hotels, to accommodate travellers in the midst of what had before been mere mountain solitudes.

Byron was not so much country bred as Scott; yet to the last he felt the influence of the wild Highland scenery amidst which he had been brought up when a boy.[1] Richter, in his *Autobiography*, when speaking of the im-

[1] His poem of Loch-na-gar commemorates some of his youthful impressions, and in his *Don Juan*, he writes:—

"As 'Auld Lang Syne' brings Scotland, one and all—
Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue hills and clear streams,
The Dee, the Don, Balgownie's brig's black wall—
All my boy feelings, all my gentle dreams
Of what I then dreamt, clothed in their own pall,
Like Banquo's offspring;—floating past me seems
My childhood in this childishness of mine;
I care not—'tis a glimpse of 'Auld Lang Syne.'"

Canto x. Stanza 18.

portance of birthplaces, says: "Let no poet get himself born and reared in a capital; but rather, if possible, in a village, or, at most, in a small town. The superabundance and over-fascination of a large town are to the delicate, excitable young soul, a feasting at dessert, a drinking of burning spirits, a bathing in glowing wine. Life is exhausted in him during boyhood; and after the greatest he has nothing left for which to wish, but that which at any rate is smaller, namely, the village." The birthplaces of poets have certainly been more identified with hamlets or villages than with towns or cities.

Shakespeare was born in a purely rural district, and lived there until manhood; when he left his birthplace to seek his fortune in the great city. We know nothing of Shakespeare's boyhood, but it is obvious from his works that he must have spent much of his time in the fields, and been a close observer of nature. "He is very rarely," says Charles Knight, "a descriptive poet so-called, but images of mead and grove, of dale and upland, of forest depths, of quiet walks by gentle rivers,—reflections of his own native scenery, —spread themselves without an effort over all his writings. All the occupations of a rural life are glanced at or embodied in his characters. . . . The nicest peculiarities in the habits of the lower creation are given at a touch; we see the rook wing his evening flight to the wood; we hear the drowsy hum of the sharded beetle. He wreaths all the flowers of the field in his delicate chaplets; and even the nicest mysteries of the gardener's art can be expounded by him. All this he appears to do as if from an instinctive power. His poetry in this, as in all other great essentials, is like the operations of nature itself: we see not its workings. But we may be assured, from the very circumstance of its appearing so accidental, so spontaneous in its relations

to all external nature and to the country life, that it had its foundation in very early and very accurate observation."[1]

There are even traditions extant relating to Shakespeare's deer-stealing,[2] that, either from love of sport or for gain, he poached upon the preserves in Sir Thomas Lucy's deerpark. However this may be, it is obvious from Shakespeare's works, that he was familiar with all forest sports, and most probably participated in them, lawfully or otherwise. In his first poem, *Venus and Adonis*, "the first heir of my invention" he calls it, he describes a hare hunt most vividly. Indeed the description has never been surpassed. The poet's love of the country lasted during his life. When he had realised a competency as a London stage-manager, he returned to Stratford-on-Avon, to spend and end his days amidst the scenes of his youth, and his bones now rest under the choir of his village church.

Shenstone, Cowley, Cowper, Goldsmith, Burns, and Thomson, were all country boys. What exquisite pictures of rural life we owe to them—full of nature and beauty. But Wordsworth was perhaps more a country boy than most of them. Born and brought up on the verge of the lake and mountain district, his mind was early impressed by the objects which surrounded him. Idle at school, and of a solitary disposition, he was left to wander about at will; but he found companionship in nature, which became his best teacher. His poems are for the most part but vivid reflections of the scenes and people amidst which he lived. His worship of nature amounted almost to a religion. The sounding cataract "haunted him like a passion"; and the rocks, mountains, and woods, were to him "an appetite." The

[1] C. Knight, *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 34.

[2] A subject on which Walter Savage Landor has written one of his best conversations, *The Citation and Examination of Shakespeare*.

spirit of Wordsworth—"sole king of rocky Cumberland"—still pervades the district in which he lived; and Grasmere, Rydal Mount, and Keswick, have become classical spots in English scenery. How many places have been hallowed by our country poets, and are indeed remembered chiefly in connection with their names. Thus Shakespeare is identified with Stratford-on-Avon; Sir Philip Sidney, with Penshurst; Waller, Burke, and Disraeli, with Beaconsfield; Pope, with Twickenham; Cowper, with Olney; Shenstone, with the Leasowes; Thomson, with Richmond, where he wrote *The Seasons*;[1] Burns, with Alloway Kirk; Scott, with Abbotsford; Wordsworth, with Rydal Mount; and Byron, with Newstead Abbey.

The country has also exercised influences upon men who have been born and brought up in cities. Though Milton was born in Bread Street, London—within sound of Bow Bells—and was "city-pent" for the greater part of his life, he nevertheless loved nature, and painted its sights and sounds in glowing colours. Johnson says that Milton "saw

[1] Elihu Burritt, the American, thus wrote of Richmond in his *Walk from London to Land's End*:—"Of all the memories that a town or locality acquires and perpetuates, none are so full of speaking life as the great remembrance of some man the world venerates or admires, who was born there, or who there gave birth to some thousand-tongued immortality of thought, which has sent its like-producing speech into the souls of all subsequent generations. I stand on Richmond Hill and look down on the town sloping up from the river. "Who are you?"—"I am an American, a New England man, of average reading among a reading people."—"How came you to know there was such a place as Richmond, and what are you here for?"—"Thomson's *Seasons*, sir, was the first book of poems I ever read; and I read it over and over again, when I was an apprentice with a leather apron. I read it by the forge-light, against the forge chimney, where I planted it open in the coal-dust, and took short sips of its beauty while the iron was heating and the sparks going upward. And Thomson lived, and thought, and wrote here, and put Richmond in his *Seasons*."

nature through the spectacles of books," but it is much more probable that he saw it with his own eyes. London was not in his time what it is now—a province covered with houses—but a moderate-sized city, surrounded by green fields. Between the city walls and Highgate lay a tract of finely-wooded country, with green lanes stretching in all directions. Beyond the Strand were green fields and the Parks. Indeed, it is not so long since woodcocks were shot on the ground which is now covered by Regent Street. Besides, Milton spent some time at Cambridge. While there, he wrote, in his twenty-first year, his grand *Hymn on the Nativity;* and after he had left the university he went to his father's house at Horton, in Buckinghamshire, where he wrote his *Arcades*, *Comus*, and *Lycidas*, as well as, probably, his *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*,—all full of country life and atmosphere. There are certain passages in *L'Allegro* which none but a poet who had lived much in the country could have written. That Milton took delight in country wanderings appears from his epistle to his Italian friend Deodati, written from London, in which he says—

> "Nor always city-pent or pent at home,
> I dwell; but when spring calls me forth to roam,
> Expatiate in our proud suburban shades
> Of branching elms, that never sun pervades."

There is, however, a different view to be taken of this subject. Mr. Ruskin, for instance, attributes his admiration for nature to the circumstance of his having been born in London. "I was accustomed," he says, "for two or three years, to no other prospect than that of the brick walls over the way." Hence, when taken into Cumberland, the intense joy, mingled with awe, with which he gazed at the lakes and mountains! "Though I could always," he says, "make myself happy in a quiet way, the beauty of the

mountains had an additional charm of change and adventure which a country-bred child would not affect."

Some such fascination must have influenced the mind of Keats, who, though a purely city-bred boy, was one of nature's enthusiastic admirers and most exquisite delineators. Haydon, the painter, who knew him well, says that "Keats was in his glory in the fields: the humming of a bee,[1] the sight of a flower, the glitter of the sun, seemed to make his nature tremble; then his eyes flashed, his cheek glowed, his mouth quivered." No one knew better than Wordsworth, or has shown us with such wonderful power, the deepness of the impressions of childhood. Coleridge said that the scenes of his childhood were so deeply written on his mind, that when upon a still shining day of summer he shut his eyes, the river Otter ran murmuring down the room, with the soft tint of its waters, the crossing plank, the willows on the margin, and the coloured sands of its bed. Keats had none of these early associations, but he made up for them by his close observation and his intense poetical nature.

We not only expect the products of genius from the country; but we expect bone and muscle to keep the nation strong and healthy. We want stout and powerful men to defend our hearths and homes in time of need; and where can we find them but in the country—in the fields, on the moors, or among the hills and mountains?

[1] Milton speaks of "Darkness visible"; and Keats in the following passage makes Silence audible:—

> "And as a willow keeps
> A patient watch over the stream that creeps
> Windingly by it, so the quiet maid
> Held her in peace, so that a whispering blade
> Of grass, a wailful gnat, a bee bustling
> Down in the blue bells, and a wren light rustling
> Among sere leaves and twigs, might all be heard."

It is in the country that we find the able-bodied men, qualified for hard work, and capable of manual skill. All the interests, all the services, all the enterprises of civilized life, depend upon such men.

Centuries ago, the men who fought at Cressy, Agincourt, and Poitiers, were ploughmen led by English squires. When the powerful Spanish Armada invaded the coasts of England in Queen Elizabeth's time, Her Majesty's army consisted of country squires, farmers, and farm-labourers; and her fleet consisted, for the most part, of coasting vessels, led by Sir Francis Drake, the son of an obscure yeoman—some say of an agricultural labourer. When, at a subsequent period in our history, Charles I. attempted a course which, if unchecked, might have led to a worse than Eastern despotism, he was resisted by the country gentlemen of England, followed by farmers and labourers. It was from the same class that the thews and sinews came that won the victory of Blenheim, and that at Waterloo helped to beat down the Conqueror of Europe. The Irish and Scotch brigades had equal glory in the campaigns of England. Sixteen hundred men from the little storm-beaten island of Skye stood in the ranks at Waterloo,—besides many heroic regiments from Ireland and Scotland.

But few such men exist now. The stalwart recruits, who, drilled into soldiers, fought the battles of the nation —in India, the Peninsula, and the Low Countries—have almost entirely disappeared. They have either emigrated from Ireland to America or the colonies, or have taken refuge in our manufacturing towns and cities. In the Highlands you may see the ruins of their cottages — mounds of ruined homes and remnants of old gables; but the men have gone for ever, and will never return. The Highland lairds first wanted their crofts for the feeding of

sheep; and then, when they found it paid better, for the feeding of deer. Most rich men now boast of their deer forests in Scotland. They little know how much the pursuit of their pleasure has cost the nation. One American sportsman holds a deer forest from sea to sea—from the German ocean to the Atlantic. Another "Triumph of Democracy"!

It is the same in the Lowlands. There, agricultural labour is for the most part done by machinery. But this is not all. The great bulk of our food is now grown abroad, by the Russians, and especially by the Americans of the far north-west. And while they protect themselves against our manufactures, we let their produce into our country tax-free. The most essential of British industries is in the process of destruction. Every year sees a larger portion of our formerly fertile fields laid down in grass. Hence the farmer is disappearing, and the agricultural labourer with him. Only the incapables are left behind. Cottages, in hamlets and villages, are pulled down so as to give no further shelter, and thus to relieve the poor-rates. If war ever happens—and all Europe is at present armed to the teeth—we shall have to fight for our food at sea; but where the soldiers and sailors are to come from, no one can tell.

We cannot find them in the Highlands, for the glens are depopulated. We cannot find them in Ireland, for, whether they be willing to fight or not, the population of that country has diminished from eight to five millions within fifty years. We cannot find them in the English counties, for the agricultural labourers are leaving their pursuits, swelling the town populations, and aggravating the scarcity of employment. We are therefore driven to our towns and cities; but what do we find there? Men able to guide machines and spin an even thread—men more remarkable

for mental activity than for bodily vigour—men able to endure their eight or ten hours' work in a heated atmosphere—but quite unable to take the place of the sturdy Highlanders or stalwart English labourers in the work of defending the nation, or even fighting for their foreign-grown bread. City men may be very intellectual, and as receptive of knowledge as sponges, but they are not the men to do the hard and enduring work of outdoor life.

Dr. Beddoe, an accomplished man of science, made a special inquiry into the Stature and Bulk of Man in the British Isles some years ago. In his report he urged the necessity of maintaining the national fibre in the highest condition of physical strength and energy. "Thews and sinews," he said, "may not be so universally and pre-eminently valuable among civilised as among cultivated peoples; but in all ages, since the English became a nation, their position among other nations has been in a great measure due to the frequency among them of individuals of great strength and physical energy; and when we as a nation fall below others in this respect, we shall suffer for it, not merely in our military, but in our commercial and even in our scientific position."

Dr. Beddoe says that it may be taken as proved that the stature of man has become degenerated in these islands, principally by the fact of his transformation from agricultural to manufacturing pursuits; and that such degeneration is hereditary and progressive. It is progressive, because manufacturing populations, in consequence of their higher wages, drink more, and smoke more, while their offspring often inherit phthisical or syphylitic tendencies, thus causing further degeneration. "If we examine," says Dr. Beddoe, "only a single race at a time, we shall find that wherever that race attains its maximum of physical development, it

rises highest in energy and moral vigour. Thus the inhabitant of Oude or the Punjaub is as superior in courage and energy to the puny Bengali, as he is in bodily conformation. And to come to nearer home, I have shown that Scotland in general, Northumberland, Cumberland, parts of Yorkshire and Cornwall, are the portions of Great Britain which produce the finest and largest men. I think it will be acknowledged that they also yield more than their share of ability and energy for the national benefit."[1]

While great cities may be the centres of enterprise, they are by no means the centres of health and energy. Indeed, the manufacturing towns and cities may be regarded as the graves of the physique of our race. The late Lord Shaftesbury, at one of the meetings of the Young Men's Christian Association, said that "the rush of modern days to the towns was such that they were sucking up the life-blood and strength of the country." The late Canon Kingsley used to deplore the large proportion of undersized young men and women whom he noticed in the streets of large towns, generally stunted, narrow, and pale. Dr. Ferguson, of Bolton, one of the certifying surgeons under the Factory Acts, has expressed the opinion that the low condition of health in his district is partly to be attributed to intemperance, which tells with additional force on account of the sedentary lives of factory-workers. It is also in a great measure to be attributed to smoking and chewing tobacco; while the mothers, unable to yield milk, feed their children upon tea and coffee.

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[1] Beddoe, *On the Stature and Bulk of Man in the British Isles*, pp. 179, 185. See also Dr. Beddoe's papers on the same subject, read at the Social Science Association in 1857 and 1861. Dr. Morgan, of Manchester, has also published a paper on *The Degeneracy of Race as exhibited in Town and Country Population.*

There is something, however, to be said for cities. Men are social and sympathetic; they desire not only pleasure but culture. The ways in which men benefit by frequent intercourse with others are numerous. Science and literature centre in the cities. "Man," says Dr. Guthrie, "reaches his highest condition amid the social influences of the crowded city. His intellect receives its brightest polish where gold and silver lose theirs—tarnished by the searching smoke and foul vapours of city air. The finest flowers of genius have grown in an atmosphere where those of nature are prone to droop and difficult to bring to maturity. The mental powers acquire their full robustness, when the cheek loses it ruddy hue, and the limbs their elastic step, and pale thought sits on manly brows, and the watchman, as he walks his round, sees the student's lamp burning far into the night."

Statistics, it is true, prove that, by means of sanitation, the longevity of city men has been largely increased of late years. The death-rate of London is especially low—much lower than that of most continental cities; and yet the inhabitants breathe a less pure air than in the country, and inhale much smoke and fog. Generally speaking, the mortality is the greatest where the people live closest together. To use the language of Dr. Farr: "The nearer people live to each other, the shorter their lives are." At the present time, it is stated that there are one hundred dwellers in the country to one hundred and ninety-nine dwellers in English towns.

Dr. Johnson, though a native of Lichfield, was fond of London and city life. He was in his glory in Bolt Court. When in his brightest mood, he would say to Boswell, "Come, sir, let us take a walk down Fleet Street."—"Why, sir, Fleet Street has a very animated appearance, but I think the full tide of human existence is at Charing Cross."—

"London," he said, "is nothing to some people; but to a man whose pleasure is intellectual, London is the place." On another occasion he said: "The town is my element; there are my friends, there are my books, and there are my amusements. . . . When a man is tired of London he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford." Sir Joshua Reynolds was as fond of London as Johnson, "always maintaining," says Malone, "that it was the only place in England where a pleasant society might be found." Though Reynolds had a villa at Richmond, he seldom spent a night there, saying that the human face was his landscape, and that he would not sacrifice the stir of London for any kind of suburban scenery.

But the Londoner, *par excellence*, was Charles Lamb. He was essentially metropolitan in his character. He was born in London, and lived there through boyhood and manhood. He loved London—its streets, its sounds, and its smells. He wandered lovingly among the old bookstalls, and gazed into the shop windows. His whole intellectual and social life was rooted in London. He not only admitted that he was a cockney, but gloried in it. While Sir Walter Scott said: "If I did not see the heather once a year, I think I should die," Charles Lamb said: "I must have a prospect of seeing Fleet Street, or I should mope and pine away. Let not the lying poets," he added, "be believed, who entice men from the cheerful streets. I would set up my tabernacle there." On one occasion Wordsworth induced Lamb to visit him at his mountain home in Westmoreland. Lamb went, enjoyed the visit, but was never happy until he got back to London and "the sweet security of streets." Writing to Wordsworth on his return, Lamb said: "It was a day that will stand out like a mountain in my life. Fleet Street and the Strand are

better places to live in for good and all. I could not *live* on Skiddaw." Writing to Wordsworth on another occasion, as to his associations with London, Lamb said: "These things work themselves into my mind: the room where I was born; the bookcase that has followed me about like a faithful dog (only exceeding him in knowledge) wherever I have moved; old chairs; old tables; squares where I have sunned myself; my old school; these are my mistresses. Have I not enough without your mountains?"

Very different was the impression made upon a Highland chief during his visit to London. He was the pride of his native glen, and accustomed to the adulation of his clan: "What will they think of the Laird when they see him in London!" Alas! his appearance there excited no sensation; the mighty chief caused no more sensation than the cabman or the driver of a dray horse. How did he account for it on his return to his native glen? "Oh," said he, "London was in a very confused state when I was there!" It is the magnitude, the impassiveness, the bustle and apparent confusion of mighty London, which so powerfully impresses the mind. Heine, the German poet, took a different view from the Highland chief. "I have seen," he says, "the greatest wonder which the world can show to the astonished spirit; I have seen it, and am still astonished; still there remains fixed in my memory the stone-forest of houses, and amid them the rushing stream of faces of living men with all their motley passions, all their terrible impulses of love, of hatred, and of hunger. It is London that I mean. Send a philosopher to London, but, for your life, not a poet! Send a philosopher there, and set him at the corner of Cheapside, where he will learn more than from all the books of the last Leipsic fair. Whilst all the billows of human life roar around him, a sea of new

thoughts will rise within him, and the eternal spirit which moves upon the face of the waters will breathe upon him; the most hidden secrets of social harmony will be suddenly revealed to him; he will hear the pulse of the world beat audibly, and see it visibly. . . . This downright earnestness of all things, this colossal uniformity, this machine-like movement, this troubled spirit in the midst of pleasure itself, this exaggerated London, smothers the imagination and rends the heart."

The Londoner, born and bred in the midst of these sights, has no such feeling. He has been familiar with them all his life, and they make no impression on him. He may become quicker and sharper than if he had been born in the country, but his mind receives no permanent impulse; and though he may be perfect in his own groove, he is but little outside of it. He knows little of the people whom he lives amongst, and of country people still less. Hence the principal movements of society—political and social—have not originated in London. They usually come from the provinces. The late Mr. Cobden used to say, during the Anti-Corn-Law League agitation, that his greatest difficulty was to rouse London. The Londoners were too much occupied with their own special business to look beyond it, or to lend their help to the provincial enthusiasts.

Carlyle, after his first visit to London, said of it: "I had much rather visit London from time to time than live in it. There is, in fact, no *right* life in it that I can find: the people are situated here like plants in a hothouse, to which the quiet influences of sky and earth are never in their unadulterated state admitted. . . . It seems as if you were for ever in "an inn," the feeling of *home* in our acceptation of the term is not known to one of a thousand."

Like other great cities, London attracts enterprising and

energetic minds from all parts of the nation. It is the headquarters of intellect, law, business, and speculation. In all these departments, we find men from the country occupying the front rank. Our Prime Ministers are mostly from the agricultural districts. A recent Lord-Chancellor and an Attorney-General hailed from Belfast, and the late Archbishop of Canterbury from Edinburgh. Even the student of Craigenputtock was eventually attracted to London, and issued volume after volume from his house in Cheyne Walk.[1] Men from the country conduct London newspapers, sit on judges' benches, write books, manage railways, and are at the head of large city concerns. From Whittington's time until now, they have enjoyed a large share of city honours and dignities. Probably more men from the country have risen to be Lord Mayor[2] than born Londoners, with all their advantages of endowed education, family connection, and guild and city influences. Men from the country—who have come in contact with the soil, and are fresh from the mother earth—are often the greatest lovers of London and city life. They love it for its resources, its scope for merit, its social liberty, and its ever-varying active life. They can return to the country from time to time, to visit it, if not to live there. Younger men have their holidays, and enjoy themselves as volunteers, or on their bicycles and tricycles, scouring the country for some sixty miles round the metropolis; thus maintaining an amount of physical health, which, even in the country, can scarcely be surpassed.

[1] The British Museum, and afterwards the London Library, which Carlyle helped to found, were among his greatest attractions in London. Even Louis Blanc could not write his *French Revolution* without studying the *Affiches* in the British Museum—the only library in which they exist in a complete form.

[2] See Orridge's *Citizens of London and their Rulers*, pp. 220-257.

CHAPTER IX

SINGLE AND MARRIED—HELPS-MEET

Love makes the woman's life
Within doors and without.—Sir S. Ferguson.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.—Shakespeare.

It is a golden chain let down from heaven,
Whose links are bright and even:
That falls like sleep on lovers, and combines
The soft and sweetest minds
In equal knots.—W. B. Scott.

Shepheard, what's Love I praie thee tell?
Is it that fountain and that well,
Where pleasure and repentance dwell?
Is it, perhaps, that sauncing bell,
That toules all into heaven or hell?
And this is Love, as I heare tell.—Sir W. Raleigh.

IN describing some of the more important characteristics of biography, the relations which exist between men and women cannot be overlooked. Love and marriage influence the minds of most men, bringing help and solace to some, and misery to others. "We love," says Virey, "because we do not live for ever: we purchase love at the expense of our life." "Nuptial love," says Lord Bacon, "maketh mankind; Friendly love perfecteth it; but Wanton love corrupteth and debaseth it."

There cannot be a doubt that Christian civilisation has

greatly elevated the position of woman, and enabled her to preserve that manhood of the soul which acknowledges no sex. It is through her influence that men and women are taught these divine lessons of morality and religion which maintain the reign of civilisation. It is at the sanctuary of the domestic hearth that woman rules the world as much as if she herself possessed the reins of government.

Many men and many women, however, remain single. It has, indeed, been a moot point whether the state of marriage or celibacy is the most favourable for human happiness and culture. The majority, following their natural instincts, marry; while others, like St. Paul, "having no necessity, and having power over their own will," have remained single; the former, according to the apostle, having done "well," but the latter "better." Lord Bacon, himself a married man, though not much of a lover, has said: "He that hath Wife and Children, hath given Hostages to Fortune; for they are Impediments to great enterprises, either of Vertue or Mischiefe. Certainly the best workes, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the Unmarried or Childlesse Men; which, both in Affection and Means, have married and endowed the Publicke."[1] This statement is, however, too sweeping. The unmarried man is doubtless enabled to devote himself more exclusively to intellectual pursuits. He is freer in his habits and customs; and less trammelled by consideration of the wants and necessities of others. At the same time he deprives himself of that which gives many men strength and comfort in life—rest of brain and peace of spirit, and that sustaining refreshment which he can only find in the affectionate sympathy and counsel of an intelligent help-meet. "What men do in middle life," said Dr. Arnold, "without a wife and

[1] Bacon, *Essay of Marriage and Single Men.*

children to turn to, I cannot imagine; for I think the affections must be sadly checked and chilled, even in the best men, by their intercourse with people, such as one usually finds them in the world."

Many of the greatest men of genius have doubtless been single men, their passion for knowledge absorbing all other passions. Probably Newton never knew love, nor even the love of fame. It is said that he once went a wooing and began to smoke, and that in his forgetfulness he tried to use the forefinger of the lady as a tobacco-stopper. Their courtship was, of course, brought to a sudden end. It is possible also that Newton's excessive shyness, encouraged by his retired and meditative life, debarred him from enjoying the society of lady companions, the want of which he seems never to have felt. Hobbes purposely avoided marriage, to which he was once inclined, in order that he might devote himself more sedulously to study. Adam Smith lived and died a bachelor. He professed that he was "a beau only in his books." Chamfort, the misanthropist, said: "Were man to consult only his reason, who would marry? For myself I wouldn't marry, for fear of having a son who resembled me."

Among other distinguished celibates were Gassendi, Galileo, Descartes, Locke, Spinoza, Kant, Isaac Barrow, Bishop Butler, Bayle, Leibnitz, Boyle, Cavendish, Black, and Dalton. Not only was the sexual instinct wholly wanting in Cavendish, but he entertained a morbid antipathy to women. To avoid the female servants in his house he ordered a back staircase to be built, and if he encountered one of them in passing from one room to another she was instantly dismissed.[1] His shyness amounted to a disease.

[1] "One evening, at the Royal Society, we observed a very pretty girl looking out from an upper window on the opposite side of the street

He would never have his portrait taken. If looked at, he was embarrassed. He shrank from strangers, and could scarcely enter a room which contained them without a shudder. Withal, he was an excessively cold, passive man, apparently without feeling of any sort. He died as impassively as he had lived. His biographer says of him: "He did not love; he did not hate; he did not hope; he did not fear. . . . He was almost passionless—a scientific anchorite." Surely this man, however scientific, would have been all the better for being redeemed from inhumanity by the society of an affectionate help-meet. "Certainly," said Lord Bacon, in the Essay above quoted, "Wife and Children are a kinde of Discipline of Humanity."

Most of the great historians have remained unmarried—Hume, Gibbon, Macaulay, Thirlwall, Buckle, and others. Camden was so absorbed by his researches that he declined marriage in order to devote himself more exclusively to study. To be an accomplished historian requires a devotion so complete as to shut out every other kind of devotion, and to leave no room for family or domestic enjoyments. Hume's biographer quotes some verses said to have been written by him, in order to prove that he was susceptible of love; but there is no evidence to prove that he was ever touched by the passion. On the contrary, he discusses the subject in his *Essays* with as much indifference as some problem in Euclid.

Gibbon was, however, at one period of his life unquestionably in love, with no other than Mademoiselle Curchod,

watching the philosophers at dinner. She attracted notice, and one by one we got up and mustered round the window to admire the fair one. Cavendish, who thought we were looking at the moon, hustled up to us in his odd way and when he saw the real object of our study, turned away with intense disgust, and blurted out *Pshaw!*"—G. Wilson, *Life of Cavendish*, p. 170.

daughter of the Protestant pastor of Crassy, afterwards wife of the financier Necker, and mother of the famous Madame de Stäel. Gibbon was a young man at the time, residing at Lausanne, in Switzerland; where the wit and the erudition of the young lady were the theme of general admiration. "The report of such a prodigy," says Gibbon, "awakened my curiosity; I saw and loved. . . . She permitted me to make two or three visits at her father's house. I passed some happy days there in the mountains of Burgundy, and her parents honourably encouraged the connection. In a calm retirement, the vanity of youth no longer fluttered in her bosom; she listened to the voice of truth and passion, and I might presume to hope that I had made some impression on a virtuous heart." When Gibbon, then only about twenty, mentioned the subject of his engagement to his father on his return to England, the latter was so much opposed to it that Gibbon at once resigned the lady; from which it may be inferred that his love was not of an ardent character. "After a painful struggle," he says, "I yielded to my fate; I sighed as a lover; I obeyed as a son."

Jeremy Bentham never married; yet in his early life he formed an attachment to which he remained true till death. Even when an old man, Dr. Bowring saw the tears roll down his face when he spoke of his early love affair at Bowood. At sixty, he met the lady again, and renewed his addresses, but the love was all on one side, and she refused—both remaining single. As Bentham grew older, his one affection seemed to take stronger possession of him, and in his old age he addressed the lady in a touching letter. "I am alive," he wrote, "more than two months advanced in my 80th year—more lively than when you presented me, in ceremony, with the flower in the green lane. Since that day not a single one has passed (not to

speak of nights) in which you have not engrossed more of my thoughts than I could have wished. . . . I have still the pianoforte harpsichord on which you played at Bowood: as an instrument, though no longer useful, it is still curious; as an article of furniture, not unhandsome; as a legacy, will you accept it? I have a ring, with some of my snow-white hair in it, and my profile, which everybody says is like. At my death you will have such another; should you come to want, it will be worth a good sovereign to you. You will not, I hope, be ashamed of me. . . . Oh, what an old fool am I after all, not to leave off, since I can, till the paper will hold no more." Perhaps the lady did think Bentham the "old fool" he described himself, for his letter drew forth no response. Yet one cannot but think more kindly of the benevolent old peripatetic of Queen Square Place, on reading this revelation of his inner heart, while occupied in the development of his system of political philosophy, which Wordsworth the poet described as "cold-blooded, calculating, and selfish."

Neither Pitt nor Fox, the political rivals, ever married. Pitt, though supposed to be a man of icy nature, was at heart tender and affectionate. His domestic life was blameless: the tone of his mind was singularly pure and elevated. His private intercourse was full of little humanities. We have already seen that one of his chief delights was playing and romping with children. He could also fall in love, deeply and ardently. The object of his affections was Lady Eleanor Eden, a lady of a lofty style of beauty, quite dazzling from the grandeur of her forehead. It nearly broke his heart to give her up; but he did so from a conviction that the ties of domestic life were incompatible with the engrossing claims of public affairs. The sacrifice was dictated by a fine sense of duty and honour.

Among the great artists who remained single were Leonardi da Vinci, Raphael, and Michael Angelo. The latter said of his art: "Painting is a jealous mistress that suffers no rival. I have espoused my art, and it occasions me sufficient domestic cares; my works shall be my children." Reynolds seemed to be of the same opinion, for he remained single from choice. When he heard that Flaxman had got married, he said: "I tell you, Flaxman, you are ruined for an artist." Yet Flaxman eventually proved that marriage had done him good rather than harm.[1] Turner and Etty were single, yet both were lovers. Turner's disappointment in love threw a shadow over his life, and his real affections were never after fairly drawn forth. Etty, on the other hand, was the subject of numerous evanescent attachments. "One of my prevailing weaknesses," he said, "was a propensity to fall in love." Yet he never committed himself to the extent of marrying.

Handel, Beethoven, Rossini, Mendelssohn, and Meyerbeer have been among the bachelors in music. Handel's love was entirely merged in his art; yet Beethoven, while he loved his art, hungered all his life for a feminine love which he never found. While but a youth, before he left Bonn, he was smitten by the charms of Mademoiselle Howrath; but she jilted him for an Austrian officer, whom she married. Yet again and again he opened his heart to the same tender influence. On the third occasion he fell in love with a charming lady who occupied a higher social

[1] See *Self-Help*, p. 176. H. Crabb Robinson says in his *Diary* (ii. p. 158), 6th February 1820: "Mrs. Flaxman died. A woman of great merit, and an irreparable loss to her husband. He, a genius of the first rank, is a very child in the concerns of life. She was a woman of strong sense, and a woman of business too—the very wife for an artist. Without her he would not have been able to manage his household affairs early in life."

position than his own. He had the "faint heart" which, it is said, "will never win a fair lady." To her, however, he ventured to dedicate his Sonata in C, composed in 1806, in which he depicted in musical accents the hopelessness, and, at the same time, the rapture of his love. This lady, the Countess Giulia Guicciardi, shortly after married the Count de Gallenberg, to Beethoven's unutterable despair. He became hopeless and morose, and from that time forward abjured all other loves but music, and devoted himself to the composition of those works through which his name has become so famous.

Such are a few of the famous men who have remained unmarried. There are many more single women than single men. Man has strength and power; he acts, moves, thinks, and works alone. He looks ahead, and sees consolation in the future. But the woman stays at home, for joy or for sorrow. To feel, to love, to suffer, to devote herself,—is not this the sum of woman's life? Yet her character is often full of beauties. She may have formed some early attachment, and been disappointed; probably she desires to remain unmarried and independent; or, possessing the power of self-occupation, she may desire to follow some special pursuit of her own, perhaps the pursuit of knowledge and literature, for the elevation and welfare of humanity. There are many single women animated by the most beautiful of motives, and associated with the noblest and most honourable members of society. Need we mention the names of Florence Nightingale, Catherine Stanley, and Sister Dora?

Single women are in many cases the best comforters, the best sympathisers, the best nurses, the best companions. A great deal of the best work of the world is done in secret and in silence; it makes no noise, and seeks no approba-

tion. There is no record made of the constant, watchful, daily service of the patient woman who keeps her home healthy and peaceful. Even in the humblest classes, single women do more than their fair share of useful and honourable work, often in the face of trials, difficulties, and temptations. How much have we to learn from the poor—of sufferings nobly endured, of burdens bravely borne. The poor are more generous to each other than the rich. They are often ready to share their last crust of bread with others more poor than themselves, and this without the least hope of reward. How many thousands are there of an undefeated legion of single women who work their fingers to the bone, perhaps on a dry crust or a sip of tea, rather than lose an atom of their self-respect, or suffer a breath of suspicion to dim their spotless shields!

Here is the reason why the Hospital for the Paralysed and Epileptic was founded. Two maiden sisters, orphans, were waiting for the return of their grandmother, who had reared them. They had waited for her long. She had left them cheerful and active. A knock was heard at the door! They opened, but could scarcely recognise the burden which the men carried in. It was their grandmother, helpless and paralysed. The old woman died, but the sisters conceived the idea of founding a charity for the special benefit of those similarly afflicted. They were not rich. They knew that the wealthy and benevolent were besieged with applications for help. Yet they persevered. They gathered together £200 as their offering to the charity. At length kind hearts took up the cause; they associated themselves together; and at last the Hospital was founded. The younger sister did not live to see the success of the institution. With her dying breath she blessed it, and entered into her rest.

No wonder that there is a general desire on the part of women to cultivate their intellectual faculties, as a means of emancipating themselves from their lonely condition, and advancing themselves in the world as men do. Hence the demands for higher education, for competitive examinations, and those struggles to reach professional advancement in which men have heretofore held the highest rank. There is no doubt that, for the comfort and support of women generally, it is necessary that their faculties should be cultivated and developed, so far as is consistent with their healthy and womanly conditions. If competition and brain-struggle applied only to the strong-minded and strong-bodied among women, little harm would be done by their struggle to achieve professional distinction; but, applied to women generally, the evils of over brain-work would be great and irremediable, and would lead in the end to the physical degeneration of the human race.

Mr. H. Crabb Robinson relates that a young lady, the daughter of a country clergyman, was so powerfully affected by the perusal of *Corinne* and *Delphine*, that when Madame de Staël, the authoress of these works, came to London, the young lady called upon her, threw herself at her feet, and prayed to serve her as an attendant or amanuensis. The baroness very kindly but decidedly remonstrated with her on the folly of her conduct: "You may think," she said, "that it is an enviable lot to travel over Europe, and see all that is most beautiful and distinguished in the world; but the joys of home are more solid; domestic life affords more permanent happiness than any that fame can give. You have a father: I have none. You have a home: I was led to travel because I was driven from mine. Be content with your lot; if you knew mine you would not desire it."[1] It

[1] H. Crabb Robinson, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, ii. p. 155.

is gratifying to add that the young lady went home cured; she became steady and industrious, and lived a life of respectability and usefulness.

If young ladies were convinced that to be intelligent, agreeable, and happy,—that nothing is a trifle which can increase the sunshine of home life,—that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well,—we shall be much less likely to hear a repetition of the pathetic cry recorded in the pages of *Punch* some years ago: "The world is hollow, and my doll is stuffed with bran, and I want to go into a convent!" Even an intelligent woman, married or single, can make her life useful to her family, and work for the scientific advantage of the world at large. Such was the case, as we have already seen, with Mrs. Somerville, who may, however, have been a woman of exceptional mental capacity.

We have spoken of single men and women; but it is more important to speak of the married, for that is the condition to which both sexes usually tend. Men and women enter the married state with different views and feelings. Some marry for love, some for beauty, some for money, some for rank, some for comfort. Some are led by their instincts only, others by their imaginations; while a few hold their feelings under control, and are mainly influenced by judgment. Though marriage is perhaps the gravest event in a man's or woman's life,—leading to the greatest earthly happiness on the one hand, or the greatest misery on the other,—there are perhaps few events which occasion less thoughtful consideration than the contract between two human beings to hold to each other "for better for worse, until death do them part." This arises perhaps from the general impression which has so long prevailed, that love is a passion over which we have no control; that it is not so much an act of the will,

as an act of the instinct; that it is an impulse to be followed, rather than to be governed and guided. Hence the sayings that "marriage is a lottery," and that "marriages are made in heaven"; though the results too often show that, without the guidance of reason, they might as well have been made "in another place."

Not many, it is true, marry their first loves. It is better they should wait until their mind, affections, and character have become matured. "The love at first sight," says Madame de Staël, "which is so seldom deep, so seldom lasting, is of especially rare occurrence in the case of two people whose great mutual attraction consists in character." Yet it occasionally does happen; though first loves are rarely based on merit and goodness of heart. Yet first love has its influence. Tennyson has told us, in *Guinevere*, what a subtle master is a boy's "maiden passion for a maid" —though she is generally older than himself—and how strong a guard it is for him through the dawning years of his manhood:

> "Not only to keep down the base in man,
> But teach high thought, and amiable words
> And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
> And love of truth, and all that makes a man."

"It was doubtless an understanding fellow," said Montaigne, "that said there was no happy marriage but between a blind wife and a deaf husband."[1] Coleridge took the same view, probably copying from Montaigne. He said: "The most happy marriage I can imagine or picture to myself would be the union of a deaf man to a blind woman."[2] It would

[1] Montaigne's *Essays*, "Upon some Verses of Virgil," book iii. chap. v.

[2] Alston, *Letters, Conversations, and Recollections of J. T. Coleridge*, ii. p. 7. The *Lowell Citizen* says—"Morse, who invented the telegraph, and Bell, the inventor of the telephone, both had deaf-mute

probably have been well if Coleridge's wife had been deaf as well as blind. She was a patient and uncomplaining woman; and was long maintained by her brother-in-law, Southey, at Keswick; while her husband enjoyed himself in monologuing to admirers at Gillman's house on Highgate Hill. Coleridge said another truer thing: "For a man to be happy in marriage, he must have a soul-mate as well as a house or yoke-mate; and for a woman, she must have a husband whom she can conscientiously vow to love, honour, and respect."

With respect to Montaigne, he was never a lover in the highest sense. Perhaps he was incapable of love. He professed that he was indifferent to marriage; and that, had he been left to his own free choice, he would have avoided marrying even Wisdom herself had she been willing. But he married to please his father, and according to "the common usance of life." In fact, his was a *mariage de convenance*, so common in France then and now; and we do not hear that his marriage proved anything but convenient and agreeable.

Some marry for beauty. When beauty represents health —of feature, form, and constitution—it is always attractive; but still more so when it represents beauty of sense and intellect. Beauty has great power in the world; and the beauty of women still more than that of men. It is one of those endowments which women especially desire, inasmuch as it is one of the chief sources of their position, influence, and power. Even so sensible and strong-minded a lady as Madame de Staël declared that she would cheerfully have given up her intellectual distinction for the single attribute of beauty.

wives. Little comment is necessary, but just see what a man can accomplish when everything is quiet."

At the same time, it must be confessed that beauty is not essential to happiness in marriage. Unless the soul shines through the features, the prettiest face may cease to give pleasure; as even the finest landscape, seen daily, becomes monotonous. The beauty that is skin-deep, does not last: it passes away like the flowers of May. Perhaps few men, after being a year married, think much of the personal attractions of their wives: after that, the mind and heart are the chief attractions. After twenty years or more, the virtuous good-hearted woman will charm her husband more than she did even in the full plenitude of her charms. Perhaps the man is safest who selects the woman whom he would have chosen for his bosom friend.

With men, good looks are much less important than in the case of women. "A man's looks," says Montaigne, "is but a feeble warranty, and yet is something considerable too." Montaigne relates that on one occasion he was taken prisoner by a marauding party, and liberated by their captain because of his countenance. Men of good looks and handsome persons, he says, are, other things being equal, the natural leaders of man; and Aristotle says that "the right of command belongs to them." Bacon, also, in his Essay "Of Beauty," notes "that Augustus Cæsar, Titus Vespasian, Edward the Fourth, Alcibiades, Ishmael of Persia, were all high and great spirits; and the most beautiful men of their times." Plato, the "broad-browed," was great alike as a thinker and a wrestler; and his speech was of such sweetness that it was traditionally said of him that a bee settled upon his lips while in his cradle. Sophocles, Alcibiades, and Pericles, are as famous for their physical beauty as for their intellectual gifts.

There is no doubt that beauty of person in a man has its advantages. He is admired, and gains a ready footing in

society. He is secure for a time of attention and respect; but he must be able to hold his own in fair conflict with other men; and if he fail, and is convicted of being foolish and unsatisfactory, he will be driven out of the field. Wilkes, one of the ugliest of men, said that he only wanted half an hour's talk with a pretty woman to be equal to the handsomest man in Europe. Popular notions on the subject of beauty are for the most part conventional. Among black people the devil is white; while among white people he is black. Custom reconciles us to everything. The inhabitants of Berama in Columbia are so afflicted with goitre that it has come to be regarded as a mark of beauty. When the late Robert Stephenson and a party of Englishmen were passing through Columbia, the cry ran through a village, "Come, see the ugly strangers —they have got no gotos"!

Form is not everything in the beauty of women. It is even possible that gifts of person may prove a disadvantage, by discouraging that attention to the mind and morals on which those less favoured by nature have mainly to depend in life. The beautiful may win hearts by personal attractions, but if they cannot retain them by attractions of heart and intellect, they will prove but mere empty caskets. The soul of beauty consists in expression. Mere beauty of features may please the eye, though it does not move the heart. The common order of beauty is youth and health; the highest is grace and sweetness of expression. Lord Bacon said that "there is no excellent beauty without some strangeness in the proportion." Indeed the power of beauty is often felt in some strange variation from uniformity. Descartes most admired women who squinted.[1] We cannot

[1] Not long since, in Paris, shortly after the operation for curing *Strabismus* had been invented, a lover who squinted had himself forth-

tell what it is that makes men fall in love with women, or women with men. It is expression far more than beauty.

But mere beauty is not enough for men and women who unite themselves in marriage. The honeymoon lasts but for a month, and there must be something more solid and reasonable than beauty to bind a pair permanently in blissful union. When kisses and blisses are over, the couple must necessarily descend to the conditions of ordinary life. The man must do his honest day's work, and the woman must make her home clean, cosy, and comfortable. The flame of love must not be allowed to die out on the hearthstone. There is such a thing as clever housekeeping, as there is of clever handicraft or headcraft. The wife must study the one as the husband the other. It is said that comfort is the household god in England—that the English worship comfort. Perhaps this comes from the raw and changeable weather, which drives people within doors. But comfort does not mean merely warmth, good furniture, and good living. It means cleanliness, pure air, order, frugality —in a word, house-thrift and domestic government. Comfort is the soil on which the human being grows; it lies, indeed, at the root of many virtues; and many of the discomforts and distractions which follow the union of those who once loved each other, arise from the neglect of these important conditions.

No doubt men do make mistakes, and so do women. Both draw about an equal number of blanks and prizes. Men of the greatest genius have their seedy side, and this is

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with cured, believing that it would render him more acceptable to his mistress; but on presenting himself to her, to his intense mortification she utterly renounced him. The aspect under which she had originally loved and accepted him was gone; and the marriage was actually broken off.—Roussell, *Systeme Physique et Morale de la Femme*, p. 131.

precisely the side with which wives are most familiar. The world sees the intellect, the achievements, of the great man; but knows next to nothing of his temper, his weaknesses, or his foibles. The wife sees the man, and the man only—not the sage, the statesman, the artist, the author. What is his fame in the outer world to her? Is not the home her world, where her life and happiness centre? The great man is usually absorbed by his pursuit—living in the past or battling in the present; perhaps he can with difficulty bring himself to take an interest in the things which constitute the daily happiness of his wife. It may be that she will not brook a divided affection, and begrudges the time devoted to others as time stolen from her. In such a case, a too exacting wife will often lay the foundations for a life of unhappiness and regret. Mrs. Grote remarks of Ary Scheffer's wife, that, unfortunately for herself as well as for him, she joined a disposition impatient of rivalry in any form, whether of man or woman, friend or relation—nay, even of Scheffer's passionate pursuit of his art. "These circumstances," she says, "led to somewhat painful results. Poor Madame Scheffer fell into the deplorable error, of which many otherwise estimable women have been the victims, *viz.* of requiring that her husband should not only love *her* above all things, but should love nobody else."[1]

The imagination is almost as unsafe a guide as mere

[1] In a note to the above passage Mrs. Grote adds: "Madame Scheffer only needed a better-regulated understanding to have rendered her lot, and her home, each a happy one. For want of self-discipline, and the discernment to estimate justly the amount of attention which she might expect from a man so rich in friends, admirers, and disciples, —for want of this, I regret to say, Madame Scheffer sometimes embittered their common existence by her exigence, and by her too exalted craving for the monopoly of her distinguished husband's time and thoughts.—Mrs. Grote, *Life of Ary Scheffer*, p. 91.

instinct in selecting a partner for life. The poet "sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt." He attributes to the object of his passion the fascinations of an angel and the virtues of a goddess. But he very soon makes the discovery that she is but a woman after all, perhaps with less endowments than other women. Poets have been precipitate in marrying. Churchill married at seventeen, Shakespeare at eighteen, and Shelley at nineteen. Perhaps Keats truly expressed the young poet's view when, at the age of twenty-three, he wrote to a friend as follows: "I am certain I have not a right feeling towards women. At this moment I am striving to be just to them, but I cannot. Is it because they fall so far beneath my boyish imagination? When I was a schoolboy I thought a fair woman a pure goddess; my mind was a soft nest in which some one of them slept, though she knew it not. I have no right to expect more than their reality. I *thought* them ethereal, above men. I *find* them perhaps equal—great by comparison is very small."[1]

The poet lives in an imagined world of his own, very different from the actual world which he inhabits. The one is ideal and beautiful, the other is hard and practical. He conjures up and dismisses the former at will; the other is ever present with him, perhaps full of carking cares, troubles, and vulgar details of life. In the contemplation of his ideal woman, the poet may even unfit himself for forming a genuine attachment to a real one. He considers all that falls short of his standard unworthy of his regard. The loves of Dante for Beatrice, of Petrarch for Laura, and of Tasso for Leonora were, for the most part, ideal. Dante neglected his wife and children to dream of Beatrice;

[1] Lord Houghton, *Life and Letters of John Keats* (edition 1867), pp. 148–149.

Petrarch would not suffer even his own daughter to live under his roof; and Tasso was long confined in a mad-house because of his unreturned love.

The love of Dante for Beatrice about six hundred years ago is still the theme of admiration and sympathy. It was the love, without return, of a boy for a girl; yet the boy became a man of genius, and the theme of his love still fascinates the student of Italian poetry. The *Vita Nuova* has been regarded by some as the beginning of the modern sentimental romance. Yet it contains the clearest internal evidence of being the actual experience of a living soul and the faithful revelations of a human heart. If Dante was not born a lover, at least love was the beginning of his life. "In that part of the book of my memory," he says, "anterior whereto is little that can be read, stands a rubric which says, *Incipit Vita Nuova*—here beginneth the New Life."

Dante, in his ninth year, meets Beatrice, a girl of eight, and falls in love with her at once and for ever. The early age at which the passion began has led some to think that the whole story is but an allegory—a poet's dream. But that Beatrice lived and breathed, no one can doubt who reads Dante's tender and impassioned descriptions: he descends to minute details and individual traits, such as would never have occurred in his description of an imaginary being. Dante never declared his love for Beatrice; and, in the end, she married another. Beatrice died in her twenty-fourth year. The shock of her death affected Dante so deeply that his best friends could scarcely recognise him. The light of his life had fled, and he was left in despair. From this time forward his love for the lost Beatrice became the pervading idea of his life. Though death had rapt her away from his bodily vision, he followed her spirit into heaven, and saw the whole universe through her eyes.

The memory of his love inspired the poet in his great work, *The Divine Comedy*, which has been called the "Deification of Beatrice."

Such was Dante's ideal life. His common life was of the earth earthy. His celestial Venus was a saint; his terrestrial Venus was but a woman. Had he married Beatrice, we should have had no *Vita Nuova*, no *Divina Comedia*. But death etherealised her, and his love became spiritual and ideal. Dante was a man as well as a poet. Only a year after the death of Beatrice, he married a noble lady of the Donati family, by whom he had a family of seven children. But he addressed no sonnets to her. Indeed, he was not very happy in her society, and when he was exiled she did not accompany him, but remained with her friends at Florence.

Though love has been the inspirer of poetry in all ages, being the passion round which romantic ideas revolve, yet few men marry their first loves. It is not of the enjoyment of love, but of love denied, love blighted, love despised, that we owe the poetic wailings alike of Dante, Petrarch, and Tasso. As with the birds in spring, desire inspires their song; with possession, they become mute. Byron says of Petrarch:—

> "Think you, if Laura had been Petrarch's wife,
> He would have written sonnets all his life?"

Petrarch was another of the blighted lovers whose songs have become immortal. He first saw Laura de Sade in the Church of St. Clair at Avignon, when a violent passion suddenly seized him. He wrote sonnets and songs in her praise, which circulated over Europe, and contributed to render this hopeless attachment one of the most celebrated in literary history. Petrarch wandered from place to place,

from court to court, sometimes secluding himself at Vaucluse, but often returning to Avignon, to catch another sight of Laura walking in the gardens beneath the rock on which stands the old pontifical palace, where Petrarch used to stand on the look-out. We have no distinct account of how Laura's husband regarded Petrarch's homage to his wife, but Campbell surmises that it did not add to her happiness, for he was in the habit of scolding her until she wept; and as he married again seven months after her death, it is probable that he did not greatly lament her loss. It has, indeed, been surmised by some that Laura was an imaginary person, but there can be no reasonable doubt of her actual existence. She died of the plague in her fortieth year, passing away, as described by Petrarch, like a lamp which is gradually extinguished for want of nourishment. When the poet heard of her death, he felt as if he had lost the only object that attached him to life. Yet Petrarch survived her loss more than twenty years, continuing to think of her and write about her as he had done in his youth—still indulging in the luxury of woe.

Tasso was powerfully influenced by the writings of Petrarch, which thrilled through the heart of young Italy. Tasso's first passion was for a young lady of Mantua, to whom he addressed many sonnets after the manner of Petrarch, styling her his Laura. But the young lady having married another, the heart of the susceptible poet became inspired by a new and still more hopeless passion for the Princess Eleonora, sister of the Duke of Ferrara. To her he addressed many of his amatory verses, and even declared his love, but without avail. It is not believed that the Princess favoured his pretensions; but giving the reins to his imagination, he depicted in glowing and even in prurient

terms the favours he had received from her. These verses, abstracted from his papers by an enemy, were shown to the Duke, who caused the poet to be apprehended and shut up in the Convent of St. Francis at Ferrara. He escaped from the convent, and wandered footsore over Italy. But he could not leave altogether the place where his heart was, and after the lapse of about a year, he returned to Ferrara. He applied to see the Duke and the Princess, but was refused. He became frantic, and denounced the house of Este and all its members. He was again arrested, and confined in the hospital of St. Anna, where he was treated as a madman. He lay there for the space of seven years, never ceasing to indulge in his hopeless but unconquerable love.

The poet Metastasio was content to entertain a platonic affection for the Signorina Bulgarini, better known as the Romanina, the greatest singer of her day. He lived under the same roof with her husband, and followed the pair up and down Italy, dedicating his time and energies to the muses and friendship. At the death of the Romanina, she bequeathed to Metastasio the whole of her property after the death of her husband; but the poet declined to take advantage of the Signora's will, and at once transferred the reversionary interest in the property to her husband. The poet Alfieri—whose appearance formed another important epoch in Italian history at a much later date—was, like Dante, an impassioned lover. It was to his loves, unhallowed though they were, that we owe most of his tragedies. As he himself says: "The desire of study and a certain effervescence of creative ideas always seized on me when I was in love."

Compared with the ardent love of the Italian poets, all others seem comparatively tame. Yet the same passion has inspired the poets of other countries, though their

strains may be less undying. The fate of Camoens somewhat resembled that of Tasso. He fell in love at eighteen with a lady above his rank, at the court of Lisbon, and was banished to Santarem, where he began his *Lusiad*. He went abroad and distinguished himself as a soldier, still cherishing his hopeless love—the theme of many of his beautiful sonnets. After many years' wanderings, he returned to Portugal to find his mistress dead, and himself in misery. Cervantes wrote *Galatea* to win the affections of a lady with whom he was in love; and though he succeeded in winning her affections, he married another.

It was love that inspired Kisfaludy, the greatest lyric poet of Hungary. Wieland was first impelled to mystic pietism by the passionate attachment he conceived for a girl whose hand he first kissed four years after he had fallen in love with her. She returned his love, and they vowed eternal fidelity. Eight years passed, and Wieland being still too poor to marry, Sophia gave her hand to Herr la Roche. But Wieland continued to love her as before. "It was an ideal," he said, "but a true enchantment in which I lived, and the Sophia that I loved so enthusiastically was the idea of perfection embodied in her form. Nothing is more certain than that, if destiny had not brought us together, I should never have been a poet." Wieland afterwards married an active, firm, prudent, and tender wife, and the love, though less ideal, was more fruitful and probably more happy.

Evald, the Danish poet, was driven to poetry by disappointed affection. The young lady with whom he fell in love married another. This circumstance threw a shade of melancholy over his life, evoked his poetical genius, and produced a depth of feeling and pathos which first discovered itself in his great poem of *Balder's Död*. Novalis

was so powerfully influenced by his affection for Sofie von K—— that it is said to have constituted the substance and essence of his whole life. She died on her fifteenth birthday, and the rest of Novalis's short life was spent in mourning her loss. "Life became for him," says Tieck, "a glorified life; and his whole being melted away as into a bright, conscious vision of a higher existence." "What made you a poet?" asked Dumas of Reboul, the baker of Nismes, author of that beautiful gem, *L'Ange et l'Enfant*. "It was sorrow," was the reply, "the loss of a beloved wife and child."

Goethe also was a lover, but in him love was a thing of the intellect rather than of the heart. Self-culture was the passion of his life. His intellect dominated over, if it did not even absorb, his other faculties. His experience of life was therefore incomplete; for love cannot be understood or described unless it has been really felt. Yet there are many beautiful delineations of the feeling in his *Autobiography*, and in various of his poems. Goethe, in his way, loved Gretchen, and Clärchen, and Frederica, and Lotte, and Lili, and Bettina, and others; but he feared marrying either of them,—it is surmised, because he feared losing his freedom. "He could paint," says Mr. Lewes, "no one better,—the exquisite devotion of woman to man; as witness those divine creatures, Gretchen and Clärchen—*that* he had experienced; but the reciprocal tenderness of man to woman, the generous, protecting, self-sacrificing feeling of the man, he had not felt, and could not express."

When Goethe had won the love of the simple girl Frederica, he threw her away like a sucked orange. All that he wanted was to make a charming idyll of her love, and his own desertion of her, to delight the world. But the abandoned Frederica was fearfully avenged by the proud,

calculating, cold-hearted poet's subsequent marriage to Christiane Vulpius. After living with her for many years, he eventually married her, when she had become fat, ugly, and intemperate. A strange ending of the love experiences of the great author of *Dichtung und Wahrheit!* "When Goethe had no woman in his head," says Mr. Hayward, "he was like a dissector without a subject. He said of Balzac that each of his best novels seemed dug out of a suffering woman's heart. Balzac might have returned the compliment."

Perhaps it is well that we should not know too much of the personal history of great poets. They are often as weak as the weakest. Even Shakespeare himself seems from his Sonnets to have been lead into evil courses during his life in London. "We know," says Sir Henry Taylor, "that he imputed the evil courses into which he was betrayed to the way of life forced upon him by the want of a competency:

> "'O, for my sake do thou with Fortune chide,
> The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
> That did not better for my life provide
> Than public means which public manners breeds.
> Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
> And almost thence my nature is subdued,
> To that it works in, like the dyer's hand.'"[1]

Though France presents many illustrations of the influence of woman on the character and works of poets and literary men, we do not find such instances of absorbing love and devotion as in the case of the Italian and German poets. With the French, love is a sentiment rather than a passion, —a thing of the intellect rather than of the heart,—often delicate and refined, but without dominating influence over the life. The love of Abelard for Heloise began and ended

[1] Sir Henry Taylor, *Notes on Life*, p. 170.

in sentiment; they married but to separate; he to enter the Abbey of St. Denis as a monk, and she to enter the convent of Argenteuil as a nun. Down to a comparatively recent period, the French monarchs exercised a most deteriorating influence upon the relations of the sexes; and their bad example filtered down through all the grades of society. Men married to cover intrigues, and women married to be "free"; their only attachments seeming to be for other men's wives, or other women's husbands. In the reign of Louis XIV., mistresses replaced lovers; and amours became fashionable. Literature was saturated with unchastity; and vice was everywhere rampant. Unchaste women were idealised and idolised *Manon Lescaut* was written by an abbé; there was no shame in such associations. Women were regarded merely as existing for men's pleasure, and treated accordingly, to their own degradation.

The great evil of the French literature of last century was that it brought into disrespect the character of woman. Society may recover from revolutions, and even be purified by them; but when the character of woman is degraded, society is poisoned at its core. It has been said that women are like bank-notes, which may be made to rise or fall in public estimation, and that literary men are the bankers. If this be true, the moral fall in France, towards the end of last century, must have been great. Diderot, Rousseau, and Voltaire merely represented their age. Diderot, the author of the *Essay on Merit and Virtue*, forsook an affectionate young wife, and wrote an obscene novel for the purpose of paying a mistress with the proceeds. Rousseau, after a long round of intrigues, took up with a low-bred girl, Therése de Vasseur, whom he eventually married. The author of *Emile* was not so good as his book; for he sent his children, almost as soon as born, to the Foundling Hospital!

Voltaire, who never married, was almost as general and as fickle a lover as Goethe. He became enamoured first of one and then of another person—Mademoiselle de Noyer, Madame de Villars, Madame Rupelmonde, and Madame de Châtelet. "What human pen," says Carlyle, "can describe the troubles this unfortunate philosopher had with his women? A gadding, feather-brained, capricious, old-coquettish, embittered, and embittering set of wantons, from the earliest to the last!" The last, if we mistake not, was Madame de Châtelet, with whom Voltaire lived under the same roof as her husband. Voltaire and Madame made a show of studying Leibnitz and Newton together, Voltaire teaching her English and Italian. After living together in seclusion and study for more than six years, Madame de Châtelet died unexpectedly, when Voltaire was thrown into a paroxysm of grief.

The number of English poet-bachelors has been considerable. Cowley, Otway, Prior, Congreve, Gay, Swift, Pope, Collins, Shenstone, Gray, and Goldsmith, died unmarried. Cowley was in love but once, and had not confidence enough to declare his affection. Swift's intrigues with Varina, Stella, and Vanessa, are surrounded with mystery. He was capable of loving ardently, though cruelly. After evoking the affections of these warm-hearted women, he shrank from them by turns, as if in horror; and he died at last "in a rage," to use his own words, "like a poisoned rat in a hole."[1]

[1] It has been surmised that Stella (Esther Johnson) was Sir William Temple's daughter, and that Swift (who discovered the secret) was his son, consequently her half-brother. "If he was," says Sir W. R. Wilde, "it certainly would account for many hitherto inexplicable portions of his conduct relative to Stella and Vanessa."—*Closing Years of Dean Swift's Life*, p. 112. The more probable cause, however, of his morbid eccentricity of conduct was, that Swift was more or less insane during the greater part of his life; and that he knew it.

The loves of Pope, on the other hand, are of a somewhat ludicrous character, arising from his distortion,[1] his diminutiveness, and his conceit. His first passion—and it was a sham one—was for a certain Lady M——, whom he addressed in a series of pert and affected epistles, which afterwards found their way into print, and were much laughed at. His second passion, which may have been a real one, was for no less a person than the celebrated Lady Mary Wortley Montague, one of the most beautiful and brilliant women in Europe. His declaration of love to her was received with irrepressible laughter. After that, Pope hated her with a hatred more cordial than his love had been, and slandered her with all the polished point and bitterness of which he was so great a master.

Far more interesting and humane were the loves of Cowper the poet. At an early period of his life, he had given his heart to his cousin Theodora, the daughter of his uncle, Ashley Cowper, by whom his love was returned. But shortly after, the young poet, then a law clerk, was visited by the first attack of the malady to which he was during the rest of his life more or less subject. Their marriage was accordingly forbidden, and both remained single for life. Cowper's disappointment found relief in verse. As Dryden has said: "Love makes every man a poet—at least a rhymer." It was while living at Huntingdon, seeking relief for his malady in change of scene that he first became acquainted with Mrs. Unwin and her husband, as well as with their son and daughter; and in course of time, Cowper formed one

[1] A question arose during a literary conversation, about the meaning of a passage in *Horace*. A bystander observed: "Might it not be explained by a mark of interrogation."—"And what is your idea, sir, of a mark of interrogation?" asked Pope. The gentleman looked down upon the satirist, and said: "It is a little crooked thing, sir, that asks questions!"

of a charming family group. Of Mrs. Unwin he wrote at the beginning of their acquaintance: "That woman is a blessing to me, and I never see her without being the better for her company." Mr. Unwin was shortly after killed by an accident, and Cowper became domesticated with the family. They removed to Olney; and there Mrs. Unwin encouraged him to write, for the purpose of diverting his mind from gloomy thoughts. Indeed it is to her and Lady Austen that we owe the principal part of his works. For twenty years, Mrs. Unwin waited upon him with the most tender assiduity, neither of them entertaining the slightest notion of matrimony. It was, to use his own words, a union of hearts without a flaw between. Mrs. Unwin's health was the first to give way. She was attacked by paralysis, and Cowper was "shocked in every nerve." He became her nurse, by turns with others. In one of the intervals of his watching he composed the tender and beautiful verses, "To Mary." Slowly she glided into the silent land. Cowper never recovered from the blow, and died three years after the death of the dear and gentle Mrs. Unwin.

It is not known that Goldsmith ever was in love. With his thriftless but simple nature it was better that he should not seek to involve another in his hand-to-mouth life. Yet it is recorded of him, that on one occasion he was with difficulty dissuaded from marrying a needlewoman, probably intending it for a kindness. The life of Charles Lamb, in connection with his sister Mary, is very affecting. She stabbed her mother in a fit of madness, and ever after was hovering on the verge of insanity. It appears from certain hints in Charles Lamb's writings, that he was once very much in love; but after his sister's disaster, he persistently denied himself the pleasures of all other female affection, and devoted himself to her, with the heroism of a martyr. There is a

romance, it is said, involved in every life, however prosaic, and this was the tender and devoted romance of poor Charles Lamb's life. Keats, the poet, who died so young, was possessed by an overpowering affection; and it has formed the subject of some of the most touching of his letters.

One of the strangest facts that has come to light of late, showing the influence of love on susceptible minds, is that relating to Beranger, the French poet. During all his life, he had made light of love,—though singing often of his Lisette, Rosette, Margot, and Jeanneton; yet, when an old man, he was taken completely captive by the charms of an English girl. He was quite wild about her; though he did not offer to marry her, yet he was full of misery, and told his grief to a friend. That friend carried him off to a distant part of the country, where they lived in solitude and unknown for many weeks, until the wounds of the aged poet began to heal. M. St. Beuve, who told the story, introduced it by the saying of Bussy-Rabutin, that love, like the small-pox, is most severe and dangerous when caught late in life.

Many love while lovers, but fail to continue their love when married. The characters of men and women remain undeveloped so long as they lead single lives; it is only when they become permanently united that love between them is fairly tested. Courting may be a sort of picnic, but marriage is the real crucible of love. Courtship is the starting-point of a long journey of pleasures and cares, of successes and disappointments, of enjoyments and troubles, —many of which are full of commonplaces, and involve considerations of money, expenses, rents, beef and mutton, and weekly bills. Some cannot stand these troubles, and break down under them; others, we believe the greater number, are patient, and endure them.

Sympathy is the main point. The help of both is neces-

sary to a perfect union. There must be control of temper, the feeling of responsibility, mutual tolerance for each other's faults (for faults there must be), adaptibility to the new conditions of life, and a united desire to make the best of everything. Those who have had the most experience will say, that if these conditions are observed, life will be full of joy, comfort, and blessing. The husband will look upon his home as his sanctuary; the wife will regard the fireside as the centre of her domestic love, affection, and enjoyment. The man and woman who are able to throw themselves into the existence of each other, and to seek the welfare of each other, have the strongest safeguard ever invented by God against the evils that result from the enjoyment of mere selfish pleasure, and also from brooding over and becoming absorbed in the sufferings of self. True love is the only combatant strong enough to overthrow the last and subtlest enemy of man.

> "A woman's goodness, when she is a wife,
> Lies much upon a man's desert; believe it, sir,
> If there be fault in her, I'll pawn my life on't
> 'Twas first in him, if she were ever good."[1]

Some men of genius married early—perhaps too early. Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway at eighteen; Ben Jonson married at twenty-one; Franklin married at twenty-four; but his mother-in-law hesitated about giving her consent to the marriage, as she did not think the young man could make his living as a printer; for there were already two printing-offices in the United States, and she doubted whether the country could support three. Dante, Kepler, Fuller, Johnson, Burke, and Scott married at twenty-six. A long rôle of poets, lawyers, statesmen, and divines might

[1] Beaumont and Fletcher.

be given, who married before they were thirty. Washington and Buonaparte married at twenty-seven, and Nelson at twenty-nine. Two poets-laureate, Southey and Colley Cibber, married very young indeed. Jeremy Taylor rose to eminence despite an early marriage; James Watt had energy and boldness left, after an early union, to conceive and carry almost to perfection the triumph of mind over matter.

In the biography of men of genius, we do not hear so much of the good wives as of the bad ones. The happiest men do not parade their home treasures. Those who find happiness in marriage make no display of it, while those who find no sympathy at home seek it abroad. Happy husbands are silent, while the unhappy are clamorous and occasionally self-vindicatory. It is with marriage as with running waters: "The shallow murmur, while the deep are dumb." If biographers were to inform us of the wives of distinguished men, it would probably be found that the good wives were greatly in the majority.

Marriage, while it exercises the affections, composes the heart. The men of business and the men of public affairs turn from the worry of outdoor life to the solace of home. There they find comfort and moral sustenance. Through the regimen of domestic love the house-mother watches over the cradle of infancy, regulates and cheers the growth of youth, comforts the rest of manhood and age, and attends to the well-being of every individual under her roof. "The wife," says Sir Henry Taylor, "who praises and persuades, warns and exhorts, upon occasion given, and carries her love all with a strong heart and not a weak fondness—she is the true helpmate." One of the greatest of statesmen, Lord Burleigh, was blessed in a wife, not only of great accomplishments but of admirable temper; and when she died he

lamented her loss as the greatest blow he had ever received. "But I ought to comfort myself," he added, "with the remembrance of her many virtuous and godly actions, whereon she continued all her life." The Count of Stelberg prefixed the words of Descartes, "Je pense, donc je suis," to his golden little book, *Von der Liebe;* but, he added, "Wir lieben, werden wir seyn"—We love, therefore we shall exist together.

We might give a long list of those who have married happily, and of those whose marriage has ended unhappily. Some have been equally yoked, and others the reverse—unequal in years, rank, fortune, mind, and heart. It is strange what qualities men have most admired in the women they have selected as their partners in life. Mason, the poet, is said to have made a proposal "to the woman he married, because, during a whole evening that he had been in her company with others, she had never uttered a single word." Yet, when married to the poet, she proved both intelligent and conversible; and when she died he greatly mourned her loss. Perhaps few have read without emotion the epitaph which he composed and placed upon her tombstone.

Calvin dispensed with love-making altogether. He had no time for courting, but called his friends to his help. Farel endeavoured to find a wife for him, but without success. Martin Bucer discovered for him the widow of an Anabaptist with a large family; he took her to wife, and they lived happily together. Very different was Luther—the genial, warm-blooded, jovial man. He addressed his wife as "his rib Kitty, his lord Kitty, his empress Kitty." "It is no more possible," he said, "to do without a wife than it is to dispense with eating and drinking. Conceived, nourished, borne by women, our very being is, in a great

measure, their being; and it is utterly impossible for us to dissever ourselves altogether from them."

Kepler, the astronomer, chose his second wife in as prosaic and business-like a way as Calvin. He made a catalogue of twelve ladies, with a list of their respective qualifications. He offered himself to some, and they refused him. One married while he deliberated. The eighth accepted him, and then repented, begging to be excused. At last he found one who accepted him, and they lived happily to the end of Kepler's laborious life. The origin of some marriages has been in a great measure accidental. The celebrated physician, Vic D'Azyr, was one day passing along the street, when a young lady fell down in a faint, and he ran to her assistance. The result of this accidental meeting was an attachment and a marriage. The young lady turned out to be the niece of the celebrated Daubenton, the naturalist. Abernethy also fell in love with one of his patients, but he was so much engaged in professional work that he had no time to court her in the usual way. He stated the case to the lady's mother, and offered through her his hand and fortune to her daughter. The offer was accepted, and the lady proved an excellent wife.

John Hunter was not so prompt in his courtship, because he was not so successful in his practice. He had acquired much reputation as a comparative anatomist, but little celebrity as a surgeon, when he formed an attachment to Miss Home, sister of the afterwards celebrated Sir Everard Home. His income was as yet too small to enable him to marry, but incited by affection he laboured on in hope and with increasing success, until at length he eventually married her after many years' long and patient waiting. Crabbe the poet of the poor, waited still longer. While struggling to

live as a country apothecary he formed an attachment to Miss Susan Elmy; but he could not marry her, being scarcely able to maintain himself. He abandoned drugs and tried authorship—the weakest of reeds to lean upon. He was fortunately helped by Edmund Burke. Then he entered the church, and obtained a chaplaincy. The publication of *The Village* established his reputation as a poet. Lord Thurlow then presented him with two small livings in Dorsetshire; and at last, after eight years' long waiting, he married his first love, and it is pleasant to know that she made him an excellent help-meet.

Some have fought for their wives; others have worked for them, studied for them, written for them, painted for them. Quentyn Matsys fell in love with the daughter of a painter, who had resolved that she should marry no one but an artist. Matsys was a blacksmith, though a remarkably skilled one;[1] but incited by love, he abandoned his craft and took to painting. He succeeded with his palette and pencil even better than with his forge and hammer, and was soon able to claim the hand of the painter's daughter.

A similar story is told of Ribalta, the famous Spanish portrait-painter. Having fallen in love with his master's daughter, he was refused on the ground that he had not made sufficient progress in his profession. On this, he departed for Rome, where he studied and worked with such success that on his return to Valencia he claimed and won the hand of the mistress of his heart.

We have heard of a happy marriage which originated in a criticism. A well-known lady having written a book of foreign travel, it was reviewed sharply, though on the whole

[1] He executed the beautiful canopy over the draw-well in front of the Cathedral at Antwerp—one of the finest pieces of ironwork in existence.

favourably, in a leading English journal. The authoress wrote to the editor requesting to be informed of the address of the reviewer, as she would like to communicate with him on certain points respecting which he had evidently been misinformed. The result was a correspondence, an interview, and an attachment,—the critic marrying the authoress, now the Viscountess S——.

Some of the wisest and most learned men have made great mistakes in marriage. The judicious Hooker was by no means judicious in the choice of a wife. He left it to his landlady, who recommended to him her own daughter. She was ill-favoured, but, worse than that, she was a shrew. When Edwin Sandys and George Cranmer went to visit him at his little living of Drayton-Beauchamp, in Buckinghamshire, they found him tending a few sheep in the fields. Getting relieved from his drudgery, Hooker returned home with his friends, when his wife immediately called him away from them to rock the cradle! Isaac Walton, in his *Life of Hooker*, gives a lamentable account of the poor preacher's unhappy lot. "Let us consider," he says, "that the prophet Ezekiel says, 'There is a wheel within a wheel,'—a secret, sacred wheel of Providence, most visible in marriages, guided by His hand, that allows not the race to the swift, nor bread to the wise, nor good wives to good men; and He that can bring good out of evil only knows why this blessing was denied to patient Job, to meek Moses, and to our as meek and patient Mr. Hooker."

Dr. Donne married secretly the daughter of Sir George More, Chancellor of the Garter and Lieutenant of the Tower. Donne, when a young man, acted as private secretary to Lord Ellesmere, Keeper of the Great Seal. While an inmate in his house, Donne had frequent opportunities of seeing the young lady, and fell vehemently in

love with her. Sir George was informed of the attachment, and at once removed his daughter to his house in Surrey; but it was too late, for the young folks had exchanged vows which were not to be broken save by death. They found the opportunity of being united by a secret marriage. On learning this, Sir George was very wroth, and urged Lord Ellesmere to dismiss his secretary. Lord Ellesmere dismissed Donne, but with the words that "He was parting with a friend, and such a secretary as was fitter to serve a king than a subject." Donne sent his young wife a sad letter, informing her of his dismissal, and subscribing it, "John Donne, Anne Donne, Undone." Sir George More went farther. He had the three several clergymen who had been concerned in marrying his daughter, who was then under the lawful age, apprehended and committed to three several prisons. The stern parent at last relented, especially when he heard the praises of his son-in-law echoed in all quarters. He accordingly allowed them to become united again, with his parental blessing, after their long separation. Anne Donne proved a loving and devoted wife to one of the best and most gifted of men.

It is not often that the portraits of wives are sent down to posterity by their husbands, as Rubens's wives were. Rubens married twice, and frequently painted both wives. He first married Elizabeth Brants, when he was thirty-two. She lived with him seventeen years, when she died. Five years passed, when he married Helena Forman, a beautiful girl of sixteen. Her portrait often occurs in his pictures. In the altar-piece at Jesus Church, Antwerp, he introduces portraits of his father and of both wives.

Simpson, the mathematician, married for a home. He was but a stripling, working as a weaver at Nuneaton, when he married the widow of a tailor, thirty years his senior, and

the mother of two sons, the younger of whom was two years older than himself. Yet this strange conjunction did not in any way interfere with the harmony of the family. When in his twenty-seventh year, Samuel Johnson married "Titty" Porter, a fat, flaring, and rather coarse widow, fond of strong cordials, with children as old as himself. Excepting Mrs. Thrale, whom he regarded with affectionate admiration, "Titty" was the only woman with whom Johnson seems to have been really in love,—and he was too short-sighted to see her personal defects. They lived together happily for sixteen years, and Johnson never spoke of her but with tenderness and regret.

Whitfield and Wesley were both unhappy in their marriages. Whitfield said he was "free from the foolish passion which men call love." He had no business to marry, but he did marry, and found himself unhappy. Cornelius Winter has left it on record, that his wife's death set Whitfield's mind "much at rest." John Wesley was still more unhappy. He married a widow, with four children, an independent fortune, and an ungovernable temper. She had little sympathy with his views, and disliked the people she was brought in contact with. Moreover, she was outrageously jealous of her husband, rifled his pockets in search of correspondence, and often tore his hair. Yet Wesley bore with her for about about twenty years. At last she left him, carrying away part of his journals, with many of his papers, and never returned. Wesley thus refers to the separation in his journal: "I did not forsake her; I will not recall her."[1]

[1] Whatever may be said of Wesley's wife, there must have been something cross-grained on the side of his own family, as it is recorded that Samuel Wesley, his father, who was a fierce Whig, discovering accidentally that his wife, who was a Tory, did not say "Amen" to the

Auguste Comte—a person of a very different stamp—was equally unhappy in his marriage. He and his wife quarrelled often and violently, and when they separated he spoke of the event as a relief from an intolerable domestic oppression. He afterwards contracted a Platonic affection for Madame de Vaux, whose husband had been sent to the galleys for life. Comte bestowed upon her the name of "Sainte Clotilde," and was accustomed to submit to her his schemes for the development and improvement of the human race. But she shortly after died, and left Comte inconsolable. He was afterwards accustomed weekly to visit her tomb, and daily prayed to her, invoking her assistance. She might be regarded, says Mr. Lewes, as the Beatrice of Comte's new *Religion of Humanity*.[1]

Although some of the greatest musicians remained single, and though Haydn was unhappy in marriage and separated from his wife, principally by reason of her extravagance, Mozart and Weber were happy in their wives, the latter especially so. Yet the life of a musician, with its excitement and constant changes, is not on the whole favourable to domestic enjoyment. Weber's courtship and wedded life, as told in his own letters to Caroline Brand, his "beloved Lena," has the charm of a romance. She sympathised with him, advised him, comforted him, and tenderly loved him. His letters to her are thoroughly German; and German love is of a much more sentimental turn than English. The former is overflowing and exuberant, the latter is restrained and shy.

The brothers Corneille married the two sisters Lampérière,

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prayer for the recovery of William III. during his last illness, conceived such a dislike to her practice that he refused to live with her, and temporarily separated from her on that account.

[1] *Fortnightly Review*, No. 16.

and the love of the entire family was cemented by the union. They lived in contiguous houses, which opened into each other, and they thus enjoyed a community of taste and sentiment. The brothers worked together, and shared in each other's fame; while the sisters were happy in each other's sympathy, and in the love and admiration of their husbands. Not less happy was the married life of Racine. His wife was pious, good, and sweet-tempered. Yet she had no taste for poetry, and knew but little of her husband's tragedies, except by name. One day Racine brought from Versailles a purse of a thousand golden louis. Running to his wife, he embraced her: "Congratulate me," he said, "on the thousand louis which the king has presented to me." But Madame Racine had as little love for money as for poetry. She only made a remark to her husband about the behaviour of one of the children. "Let us talk of that," said the poet, "another day: to-day let us give ourselves up to joy."

Jean Paul Richter was a great lover—a lover from his boyhood. At school he fell in love with Catharine Barin, and afterwards devoted a chapter in his Life to the first kiss. —"the one pearl of a minute—the ineffaceable moment." The affection was followed by a season of tender melancholy: "upon the flower and harvest crown of happiness, as upon the bridal crown, there is commonly hanging a dewdrop that looks like a tear." He fell in love æsthetically again and again, his writing exercising a curious fascination upon learned ladies of the tender-hearted school, whether married or single. At Weimar, they pleaded for locks of his hair so vehemently, and he complied with their requests so liberally, that his head became so shorn that he was under the necessity of purchasing a poodle, from whose hirsute abundance he was able to supply all future appli-

cants. Among his successive lady-loves, we find Madame von Kalb (living apart from her husband), Madame von Krudener (wife of the Russian ambassador to Denmark), Emilie von Berlepsh (who complained of the coldness of his Platonism), Caroline von F. "a heavenly duchess, with her child-like eyes, her whole face full of love and the charm of youth, and her voice like the nightingale's"; Josephine von Sydon, a charming Frenchwoman, "firm, tender, animated, simple, and naïve"; and last of all, Caroline Meyer, whom he married. But this was not the end of the fascination which he exercised upon women, for, many years after he had been happily married and when he was fifty years old, he was addressed in passionate terms by one Maria Forster, then only seventeen, who had been enthusiastically in love with his writings since her tenth year. Jean Paul discouraged her advances, gave her good advice, but sent her no further letters, on which the foolish and impassioned girl in her despair went and drowned herself.

Sheridan married twice, and, though improvident in most things, he was fortunate in both wives. When only twenty-two, he eloped with Miss Linley, an accomplished singer, six years younger than himself, and was privately married to her. Want of money drove him to literature, and two years after his marriage he brought out *The Rivals*, which was followed by his *School for Scandal* and other works. His life was one of ups and downs, of debts and difficulties, of failures and successes. Yet his young wife bore all patiently, and loved him the more perhaps—as devoted women will do—because of his imperfections. Sheridan entered Parliament and achieved great success as an orator; and shortly after his excellent wife—described by the then Bishop of Norwich, as "a connecting link between woman and angel"—died of consumption. Sheridan was

for a time completely prostrated by the event. "I have seen him," says Kelly, "night after night sit and cry like a child, while I sang to him, at his desire, a pathetic little song of mine—'They bore her to a grassy grave. I have never beheld more poignant grief than Sheridan felt for the loss of his beloved wife." But Time, the consoler, healed his wounds; and three years later he married Miss Ogle, daughter of the Dean of Winchester, an accomplished lady, ardently devoted to him. Sheridan, though careless about his own debts and difficulties, was nevertheless anxious about his son Tom, whom he desired to marry a lady of large fortune. But another, Miss Callander, had won his son's heart. One day Sheridan had a long talk with him about marriage, and threatened him that if he married Miss Callender, he would 'cut him off with a shilling.' Tom could not resist the opportunity of replying, "Then, sir, you must borrow it." Sheridan's second wife had the same troubles as the first. He was driven to all manner of shifts to raise money; and at last, harassed by duns, and deserted by friends, he died beside his faithful wife, who loved and admired him to the last.

Steele resembled Sheridan, in his improvidence and his affectionateness. He too was twice married, first to a lady of Barbadoes, and next to the daughter of a gentleman of Carmarthenshire, to whom he addressed those playful, pretty, tender, and admiring letters in which her "Prueship" is immortalised. Like Sheridan also, Steele was harassed by his perpetual want of money, and though to his wife he put on a cheerful demeanour, he was often sick at heart. He found a temporary solace in drink, and left his wife at home to drive away the duns who beset him, while he took refuge with his jolly companions at "The Rose." But Steele's better nature always came out when he thought of

his wife. Dedicating one of his volumes to her, he said: "How often has your tenderness removed pain from my sick head, how often anguish from my afflicted heart! If there are such beings as guardian angels, they are thus employed. I cannot believe one of them to be more good in inclination or more charming in form than my wife."

"Poets," said Johnson, "with reverence be it spoken, do not make the best parents;" to which it might be added, with equal truth, nor the best husbands. It may be enough to mention Shakespeare and Ann Hathaway; Milton and his first wife; Greene the dramatist, who lived with his wife for only a year; Churchill, who married at seventeen, quarrelled with his wife, and poisoned himself; Sterne, whose feelings were touched by a dead ass, deserted his wife and neglected his mother; Thomson, who married but never owned his wife;[1] Byron, whose marriage was sordid and selfish on the one side, and ungenial and ungenerous on the other; Shelley, whose first wife drowned herself, after he had abandoned her for Mary Godwin. No mistakes made by poets in marriage have been more painful than these. Yet many poets have had happy helps-meet. Parnell married a lady of rare beauty and merit, and his grief at her loss so preyed upon his mind and heart that he never recovered his wonted health and spirits. Sir Walter Scott was a most happy man in marriage: so were Crabbe, Wordsworth, Hood, and Southey.

Southey, Coleridge, and Lovell, three poets, married three sisters, the Misses Fricker of Bristol. They were all alike poor when they married. Southey was twenty-one, and Coleridge twenty-three; but they were of different

[1] The Register of old Marylebone Church contains the entry of "Died Mary Thomson, a stranger."—*Chambers's Biographical Dictionary*, 1851.

temperaments. Southey was a worker, and Coleridge was a talker. The domestic life of the one was happy; that of the other was a makeshift. When Coleridge went abroad, on an annuity of £120 granted by the Messrs. Wedgwood of Burslem, he left his wife and family to be maintained by Southey. About the same time, Lovell died, and the noble Southey took his widow and her children into his family at Keswick; and he maintained them throughout his life. Southey was also fortunate in his second wife —the estimable poetess, Caroline Bowles, who closed his eyes in death.

The poet Moore was equally happy in his marriage; "Dear Bessie" was a truly estimable woman and a most affectionate wife. The name often occurs in his diary; she was satisfied to remain at Sloperton, while he was flitting about among dukes and duchesses in London, and singing to them his Fenian war songs. Croker made fun of Lord John Russell's "Life of Moore" in the *Quarterly;* yet "Dear Bessie" contributed greatly to the poet's happiness, and tended him with devoted affection during the lingering illness which ended in his death. But the married life of Thomas Hood, with whom life was almost a continual martyrdom, was one of the happiest of all. His wife ministered to him in his sickness, comforted him in his sorrows, and made his domestic life as happy as possible under very unhappy circumstances. But for his marriage, Hood always affirmed that he never would have accomplished anything. In one of his warm-hearted letters to his wife he said—"I never was anything, dearest, till I knew you; and I have been a better, happier, and more prosperous man ever since. Lay by that truth in lavender, sweetest, and remind me of it when I fail."

The marriages of some men of genius are very strange.

Those of Balzac and Lamartine were singular. When Balzac was at the zenith of his fame, he was travelling in Switzerland, and had arrived at his inn at the very moment when the Prince and Princess Hanski were leaving it. Balzac was ushered into the room which they had just vacated, and was disturbed by the sudden entry of the Princess, who came to ask for a book which she had left on the window-seat, where Balzac was sitting. She intimated that the book in question was the pocket edition of *Balzac's Works*, adding that she never travelled without it. Fifteen years passed, during which a literary correspondence passed between the Princess and Balzac; till at length a letter arrived from her of a more directly personal tendency. It contained the announcement of the death of her husband the Prince, and intimated that she felt bound to requite him for his liberality, and determined to give him a successor in the person of Balzac himself! The delighted author wanted not a second summons. He set out at once for her chateau on the Rhine, where they were happily married, amidst a succession of splendid *fêtes* to celebrate the auspicious event. Lamartine also married an English lady of considerable property, whose maiden name was Birch. She had become passionately enamoured of the poet, from the perusal of his *Meditations;* and, becoming aware of the embarrassed state of his affairs, wrote to him and tendered the bulk of her fortune. Touched with her remarkable generosity, he at once offered her his hand and heart, which were promptly accepted.

It would occupy too much space to give an account of men of genius who have been helped by their wives. Some of them have been described in another volume;[1] but to these may be added one or two others. Buffon did not marry until late in life—at the age of fifty-five; but he was

[1] *Character*, chap. xi.

most happy in his union with Mademoiselle de Saint Belin; who anxiously watched her husband's successive steps on the road to fame, and rejoiced in the honours which were conferred upon him by learned bodies and crowned heads at home and abroad. Niebuhr, the historian, was also greatly helped by his wife. She soothed, by the charm of her presence, the anxious irritability of his temperament, and shared not merely his domestic interests but also his intellectual employments. It was with her that he first discussed every historical discovery, every political occurrence, and every novelty in literature. It was indeed for her pleasure and approbation that he laboured when he was preparing works for the instruction of the world. A few days before her death, while holding her in his arms, he asked her if there was anything he could do for her sake. She replied with a look of unutterable love, "You shall finish your *History*, whether I live or die." That was her last desire.

Perhaps too much has been said about the married life of Thomas Carlyle. It has been painted in darker colours than it deserves; the shadows have been made as sombre as in a picture by Rembrandt. Jane Welsh desired to marry a man of genius rather than a doctor in an obscure country town, and she succeeded; but the marriage was not altogether to her liking. The pair had difficulties to encounter; they had to live on small means, arising from translations, lectures, and articles in the Reviews. But even these difficulties, when overcome by eventual success, must have been full of interest to both. At length Carlyle raised himself, and raised his wife, to the highest intellectual society. Was not that enough? No: they had both sharp tongues: they were querulous and irritable; and had too little regard for each other's feelings. Yet from Carlyle's letters, notwithstanding all that has been said about him, it

would appear that he affectionately loved her. She also helped him in his work, and was as proud of his noble struggle and valiant triumph as any intellectual wife could have been. His last testimony to her memory was full of sympathy and tenderness.

When Dr. Paley was told by a friend of his wedded bliss, and that for forty years he had never had a home quarrel, he drily asked the narrator, "Did you not find it very dull?" The traveller journeying over a dead level finds his task more irksome than if his route lay through an undulating country. The same is true of married life. Jane Welsh was much happier as the wife of Thomas Carlyle than as the wife of anybody else. Even Eugénie de Suerin confessed that at the bottom of every human soul there is "un peu de limon"—some sediment of evil, though in hers there was the smallest portion.

A comparison has been made between the married life of Carlyle and Hawthorne, to the advantage of the latter. But men are different, and authors are different. Carlyle could not have written Hawthorne's works, nor could Hawthorne have written Carlyle's. The men were different; their minds were different; their wives were different; their lives were different. Only Hawthorne could have written the *Scarlet Letter;* and only Carlyle could have written the *French Revolution.* These works grew out of themselves and were their masterpieces. Finally, let us remember that even authors, as well as authors' wives, cannot be perfect.

It is true, many a man marries who does not get a leal wife, and many a woman marries who does not get a leal husband. As for the women of modern society, who—to use the words of St. Paul—"learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle but busybodies, speaking the things which they ought not"—they

are only the feeblest outcomes of a false civilisation. They are incapable of love, still less of friendship. They are false in everything, from the paint on their cheek to the words in their mouth. The fashionable woman has no home, but an establishment; children, but no family; and a husband who is neither companion, friend, nor lover. Who can wonder that a man should be afraid to marry, and prefers to enjoy his club. "I cannot afford to marry," is a common saying, even with men of fair means, perhaps prospering in the world. He "cannot afford" what young ladies are pleased to call the necessities of life. He may be sufficiently self-denying to avoid marriage and keep himself pure; though he may be drawn into evil courses, which end in misery or ruin. "Man can be bought with woman's beauty," says Haggard, "if it be beautiful enough, and woman's beauty can be ever bought with gold, if there be gold enough." The young lady marries the rich man who can give her what she desires in the way of luxury. But there is poison in the cup of pleasure, which ends in moral death.

Even when a young man gets "engaged," he does not marry until he earns sufficient to establish a luxuriant home. Probably that time never arrives, and the engagement drags on from day to day, while happiness and comfort are alike sacrificed. Mrs. Gore defends the French *mariage de convenance* because it does away with long engagements and marriages based on mutual affection. "Though much," she says, "may be urged against the wisdom of conventional marriages, yet after examining the domestic history of the higher classes in both countries, more especially when including in the investigation the condition of the single as well as the morality of the married, it will be seen that the question is more nicely balanced than a cursory glance would lead us to suppose."

If a man has gained a position that enables him to marry the person he loves—that is, a healthful, virtuous, and affectionate woman,—let him marry; and if she has prudence and sense, she will conduct his domestic affairs with judgment, and enable him to enjoy his home with comfort. Young love, if true and zealous, will make early struggles wholesome and joyous. The united pair will go hand in hand together through life—sharing each other's joys and sorrows, hoping together, striving together, and prospering together. Wealth may be desirable, but it cannot purchase pleasures of the higher sort. It is the heart, taste, and intellect—thoughtfulness, forethought, and conduct—all founded on affection, which determine domestic happiness. A good maxim is: "Take short views, hope for the best, and trust in God." The happiest marriage, like good wine, takes years to come to perfection. Two minds and hearts have to become united with each other, and to really know each other—far more than in the days of their engagement and courtship. They will then find out each other's virtues, and very often each other's weaknesses. In the latter case, they will learn to bear and forbear, and to sacrifice self in the little matters of life. Then will come, or ought to come, settled peace and tranquillity. As Jeremy Taylor says, it is in after years that "there be *many remembrances*, as well as things present, which establish love on a firm foundation." Love glorifies the prosaic by the light it casts backward; it tempers and subdues the future by the beams it casts forward. Even suffering tends to bind the married pair more firmly together. Sympathy is best taught by affliction. As the eastern proverb has it: "He who shakes the tree of sorrow is often sowing the seeds of joy."

CHAPTER X

EVENING OF LIFE—LAST THOUGHTS OF GREAT MEN

Life! we have been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather:
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear,
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear:
Then steal away, give little warning,
  Choose thine own time;
Say not good-night, but in some brighter clime,
Bid me good-morning.—MRS. BARBAULD.

Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st,
Live well; how long or short, permit to Heaven.—MILTON.

All that have died, the Earth's whole race, repose
Where Death collects its treasures, heap on heap;
O'er each one's busy day the night-shades close;
Its Actors, Sufferers, Schools, Kings, Armies—sleep.—V.

Virtute vixit:
Memoria vivit:
Gloria vivet.
—*Monument in Ste. Maria d'Angeli, Rome.*

THE evening of life has many compensations. Youth has its pleasures, and old age its recollections. The evening hours of life may even be the most beautiful, as the finest leaves of the flower are the last to disclose themselves. The fruit grows while the flowers and leaves wither, as the mind ripens while the body appears to decay. Cornaro, at eighty-five, said: "The spirit increases in perfection as the body grows older."

The American Dr. Channing was asked, shortly before

his death, what was the happiest period of life. He replied "Sixty," giving his own age. It was said of him by Coleridge, that he had the love of wisdom and the wisdom of love. His theory of life and human nature was altogether cheerful. It might even be said of him that he was too enthusiastic an optimist, for he did not seem to see the sadness and terribleness of some of the aspects of life.

The grand climacteric, at which the mind is supposed gradually to decay, has been fixed at sixty-three; but Fontenelle declared that the happiest part of his life was between his fifty-fifth and seventy-fifth years. Johnson said that Waller, at seventy-two, did not seem to have lost any portion of his poetical power. Buffon, at the age of seventy, said he had as full an enjoyment of life as he had ever before experienced. "The view of the past," he said, "which awakens the regret of old fools, offers to me, on the contrary, the enjoyments of memory, agreeable pictures, precious images, which are worth more than your objects of pleasure; for they are pleasant, these images, and they are pure, for they call up only amiable recollections."

A French moralist has said that the paradise of youth is old age, and that the paradise of old age is youth. How slowly the years seem to pass while we are young. Birthdays come at remote intervals; the paradise of age comes slowly; but as years flow on, birthdays come quicker and quicker. Then we look back at the paradise of youth, and cherish its recollections. Happy is the man who can look back with pleasure at the memory of good deeds and words. Cicero, in his work *De Senectute*, said that old age was a thing to be resisted, yet his own life exhibited an admirable example of a well-spent life—of classical elegance and refinement—so beautifully expressed in his words: *Quiete, et pure, et eleganter actæ ætatis, placida ac lenis senectus.*

The evening of life brings back many old enjoyments, especially the perusal of old and favourite books. To some it brings sports and quiet pastures, angling, planting, gardening, and herborising. Lord Chesterfield, when quite deaf, quitted the fashionable world, and went to spend the remainder of his life at his villa on Blackheath, near the avenue still known as Chesterfield's Walk. He amused himself with literature, which he said was the only conversation of the deaf, and the only bond which bound them to society. "I have vegetated all this year," he wrote to a friend in France, when he was about sixty, "without pleasure, and without pain; my age and my deafness forbids the former, and my philosophy, or perhaps my temperament, guarantees me against the latter. I derive the best part of my amusement from the tranquil pleasures of gardening, as well as from walking and reading; meanwhile waiting for death, which I neither desire nor fear." The *Letters* to his son were published after his death.

Very touching is Richard Baxter's reference to the manner in which he was led to write *The Saint's Rest.* "Whilst I was in health," he says, "I had not the least thought of writing books, or of serving God in any more public way than preaching; but when I was weakened with great bleeding, and left solitary in my chamber at Sir John Cook's in Derbyshire, without any acquaintance but my servant about me, and was sentenced to death by the physicians, I began to contemplate more seriously on the Everlasting Rest, which I apprehended myself to be just on the borders of; and that my thoughts might not scatter too much in my meditation, I began to write something on that subject."

Southey said: "I bid no man beware of being poor as he grows old, but I say to all men, beware of solitariness in

age. Rest is the object to be sought." Hence the necessity for students and others seeking to acquire some amusing pursuit, disconnected as far as possible with their ordinary calling. Talleyrand once said to a person who could not play whist: "Pray, have you reflected on the miserable old age that awaits you?" Cavour was a first-rate whist player, and quite splendid with a good hand. During the sittings of the Paris Congress, he played every night at the Jockey Club. Metternich also was a great whist player. But there are many men, to whom a game of whist is denied, who can, nevertheless, spend many pleasant hours in the evening of their lives.

Beethoven's greatest consolation in old age was reading Scott's novels, and Homer's *Odyssey*. It was different with the late Dr. Gaisford, Master of Christ Church College. When ill, he asked for some light reading, and one of Scott's novels was handed to him. "No, no," he said, "that's too heavy. Bring me a Greek Dictionary." Sydney Smith said that, when he took to light reading when ill, he resorted to such a book as Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.

Even blind men may enjoy the evening of Life. Privation of sight has been one of the greatest obstacles in the way of men of genius. How touchingly Milton bewailed his loss. Bereft of light, blind among enemies, eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves, yet bating not a jot of heart and hope, the blind old man still bore up and steered right onward. Nor was his privation all loss. As the nightingale

> "Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
> Tunes her nocturnal note,"

so Milton sang no less divinely, although his eyes could "find no dawn." Indeed, but for his privation of sight, his *Paradise Lost* might never have been written, as, at the

time when he became blind, he was meditating the composition of a History of England.

Great are the compensations of nature. The functions of sense are in some measure vicarious, and those which survive make up by their increased acuteness for those which are lost. When the eye becomes dark, the ear is increasingly alive to the pleasures of sound. The touch becomes more delicate; the fingers are like so many eyes; the face itself becomes an eye, and sees and feels all over. Cheerfulness and courage in some measure supply the loss; and hence blind men are no more insulated, but sometimes less so, than others. Blindness often soothes and sweetens the temper; whilst, with deafness, it is usually the reverse. The case of Kozlor, the Russian, seemed to be an especially hard one. He was not only blind, but paralysed in both feet. But his affliction developed in him a deep love of poetry, which he cultivated as a solace during the remainder of his life.

Euler did not lose his sight until after a long expectation of the calamity; nevertheless, after it had been entirely lost, he continued his labours, and his temper was more cheerful than before. His memory became so retentive by increased exercise that he could repeat the whole of the *Æneid*, remembering the words that began and ended on each page. Galileo became quite blind a few years before his death; but he continued his intellectual labours to the last. Dr. Tucker was struck with blindness at the age of sixty-six; but this did not interrupt his studies. His daughter read to him, and even learnt Greek in order that her father might, through her, keep up his intercourse with his favourite authors. He continued to write by means of a machine which he himself invented, and his writing was sufficiently legible to enable his daughter readily to transcribe it.

Even Thierry and Prescott were blind, though they did not become so until advanced years. To pursue historical inquiry the faculty of sight seems to be absolutely necessary. So many books have to be read and consulted from time to time. Yet, with minds originally well stored, and with the willing help of others, both these historians were able to prepare and publish works of great value and importance. While Thierry dictated to an amanuensis, Prescott wrote all his works with his own hand, making use of the writing-case and stylus invented for the blind.

Among those who became blind comparatively late in life were Delille and La Motte, Montesquieu, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Handel, Jean Paul Richter, Isaac Disraeli,[1] Jussieu, Rumpf (botanist), Cassini (astronomer), Berard (mathematician), Viscount Cranbourne, and Professor Fawcett. Heinrich Heine was quite blind for eight years before his death, during which period he wrote some of his finest works. Jean Paul, long half-blind, was at length left in total darkness, in the "Orcus of Amaurosis." Yet he was inwardly full of light, and occupied his last years in writing his *Selina*, illustrative of the immortality of the soul, the unfinished MS. of which was carried on his bier to the grave.

[1] Mr. Disraeli was enabled to pursue his literary studies by the aid of his daughter, which he gratefully records in the preface to his *Miscellanies of Literature* (edition 1840), where he says: "In the midst of my library I am as it were distant from it. My unfinished labours, frustrated designs, remain paralysed. In a joyous heat I wander no longer through the wide circuit before me. The 'stricken deer' has the sad privilege to weep when he lies down, perhaps no more to course amid those far-distant woods where once he sought to range. . . . Amid this partial darkness I am not left without a distant hope, nor a present consolation; and to HER who has so often lent to me the light of her eyes, the intelligence of her voice, and the careful work of her hand, the author must ever owe 'the debt immense' of paternal gratitude."

Perhaps the most extraordinary of blind men was Lieutenant Holman, R.N.,[1] the great traveller. He lost his sight at twenty-five, and was under the necessity of leaving the service. He must have sorely felt the loss of sight, for he was possessed by a great spirit of enterprise. But when the sentence of total darkness was pronounced upon him he made up his mind to endure it cheerfully, and to adapt himself as best he could to his new situation. What was he to do? He had a great passion for travel; yet he was blind! Nevertheless, he could but try, and he began to travel. He journeyed first into France, though he did not know a word of the language. While in London he was attended by a servant, yet he set out alone in his travels through Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia, all of which countries he visited, relying entirely upon himself. The moral courage, the energy, the self-reliance, and the irrepressible spirit of enterprise in this blind man, render him altogether one of the most remarkable characters in the whole range of biography.

The history of Professor Fawcett, lecturer on political economy, afterwards Member for Brighton, and Secretary to the General Post Office—all of which positions he filled with great talent and energy—has been made the subject of an admirable biography, and therefore need not here be further described. Deafness has not usually excited so much sympathy as blindness; though judging by its effects, it is probably the more difficult privation to endure. While blind men are usually distinguished for the sweetness of their temper, deaf men are often found churlish and morose. This may probably arise from the circumstance that the

[1] Holman's *Travels* were published by him in six volumes, and he also left a large mass of MSS. behind him, which he was preparing for publication when death terminated his labours.

deaf are shut out from the pleasures of conversation, the chief charm of social intercourse. They sit at a feast in which they cannot participate. They see the pleasures of joyous looks and laughter in those around them, which they cannot share. "The contrast in society," says Sir William Wilde, "between the frown of the partially deaf and the smile of the totally blind is very remarkable. There are, however, bright exceptions to the contrary in persons of superior understanding, and in those who, being completely deaf, are not annoyed by hearing only a portion of the conversation." [1]

As Handel was afflicted by blindness in his later years, so Beethoven was afflicted by deafness. The latter was accustomed to play on the clavier, following the combinations of notes in his ear, while, to the bystanders, many of the pedals as struck by him were mute. When deafness begun to steal upon him in his thirtieth year, he endeavoured to conceal his defect from others. He shunned society, "because," said he, "it is impossible for me to say to people 'I am deaf.' Were my art not that of music, deafness would be bad enough; but to a musician it is an atrocious torture." He became more and more isolated, irritable, morbid, and despairing, as his deafness increased, until the thought of committing suicide entered his mind. "Art," said he, "art alone restrains me. It seems to me impossible to quit the world before I have produced all of which I feel myself to be capable. I must now take Patience for my guide, and constant, I hope, shall my resolution be, to endure until the inexorable fates shall be pleased to cut the thread." It was after this gloomy period of Beethoven's life that he composed all his greatest works—his *Fidelio*, his *Prometheus*, his *Mount of Olives*, and his grand con-

[1] Sir W. R. Wilde, *The Closing Years of Dean Swift's Life*, p. 24.

certos and symphonies. It is even possible that his deafness, by driving his mind in upon itself, and by the solitariness of life to which the infirmity consigned him, might in no small degree tend to evoke and develop the musical powers and energies of the great master.

What chiefly differentiates middle age from old age is that the mind still retains the power of growth and is impressionable to new ideas. But even in old age, Dr. Johnson and James Watt learned new languages, and imbibed new thoughts. Berzelius worked in his laboratory in extreme old age. Many old men retain the vigour of faculty which is the prerogative of middle age. The French proverb says: "Si jeunesse savait, si viellesse pouvait." In middle life and old age we become mellower—more kindly, courteous, and considerate.

Length of years, however, is no test of length of life. Some live more in twenty years than others in a century. A man's life is to be measured by what he does in it, and what he feels in it. The more he does and the more he feels, the more he lives. Though some have suffered from the troubles of marriage, others have bewailed their single condition; forgetting that if they have not had the joys, they have not experienced the sorrows of wedded life. Every joy, it must be remembered, throws its shadow behind it. Pope wrote to Martha Blount from Twickenham: "The comforts you received from your family put me in mind of what old Fletcher of Saltoun said one day to me: 'Alas, I have nothing to do but to die; I am a poor individual, no creature to wish, or to fear, for my life or death. It is the only reason I have to repent being a single man. Now, I grow old, I am like a tree without a prop, and without young trees to grow round me, for company and defence.'"[1]

[1] Elwin's *Edition of Pope*, vi. p. 380.

But if he had none of the joys of children, he had none of the sorrow of losing them by early death. When Warburton lost his son by consumption he said it was losing "half his soul," and from that day his faculties began to decay. So it was with Burke, who lost his son—a young man of rare promise—at an early age. Towards the end of his life, he was reciting to his father with deep feeling the sublime lines from Milton's *Morning Hymn*—

> "His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
> Blow soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,
> With every plant, in sign of worship, wave."

Just as he pronounced the last word, his strength failed him; the lamp which had flickered up so grandly in its socket was quenched; he fell forward into his father's arms, and died. Burke's grief was terrible; and he did not long survive his son. Burke's last words were the same as those of Johnson and Wordsworth—"God bless you."

We are to a certain extent detached from life by suffering, or by the gentle pressure of sorrow. Some minds have felt the need of sorrow; and when they have not actually experienced it, have invented it. Hence the "worship of Sorrow" by Goethe in his *Werther*, the dejectedness of Rousseau in his *Consolations des Misères de ma Vie*, the "hungering for eternity" of Coleridge, the melancholy of Chateaubriand in his *Réné*, and the longing of Keats "to ease the burdens of this mystery." Even Luther, with his joyous animal nature, "old, cold, and half-blind," as he described himself to be, struggled against the gloom which oppressed him towards the close of life. "I am indolent, weary, and indifferent," he said; "in other words, old and useless. I have finished my journey, and nought remains but for the Lord to reunite me to my fathers. . . . I am weary of life, if this can be called life."

It is sad to die young, but sadder still to outlive all lives, and drop into the grave which has already swallowed up all life's attractions. To such, death is a better gift than prolongation of life. Even a heathen writer described death as the gate of life; but to the Christian it is the threshold of heaven. Thomas à Kempis said, "Verily the life of a Christian is a cross, yet it is also a guide to Paradise."

There are many who, after taking life pleasantly, depart joyfully and die in peace. Age comes upon us before we are aware, though there are some happy natures that seem never to grow old, but remain old boys and old girls to the last. There is the spring-time, the summer, the autumn, and the winter. All these seasons are full of beauty—the brightness of the early year, the glory of summer, the yield of autumn, and the maturity of winter. Nature constantly renews itself, and there is compensation everywhere. Happiness or misery in old age is but the sediment of a past life. Sydney Smith used to quote with delight the beautiful lines of Waller:

> "The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
> Lets in new lights through chinks that time has made."

Sydney Smith was one of the most cheerful of men. At seventy-five he wrote: "I am, upon the whole, a happy man: I have found this world an entertaining world, and am thankful to Providence for the part allotted to me in it." Yet he was a man who occasionally suffered much. To one of his correspondents he said that he felt as well as a man could do with three fatal diseases in him.[1] To the last he

[1] In his seventy-first year he wrote to the Countess of Carlisle: "I am pretty well, except gout, asthma, and pains in all the bones and all the flesh of my body. What a very singular disease gout is! It seems as if the stomach fell down into the feet. The smallest deviation from right diet is immediately punished by limping and lameness, and the

could not avoid joking on his troubles. In his last letter to Lady Carlisle, referring to his declining frame, he said: "If you hear of sixteen or eighteen pounds of human flesh moving about, they belong to me. I look as if a curate had been taken out of me."

William Tytler, of Woodhouselee, the historian, enjoyed a peaceful and happy old age. He had a prescription ready for his friends, which would confer the same blessing: it was "short but cheerful meals, music, and a good conscience." Count Nesselrode, when asked how he came to be so vigorous in his old age, replied that he owed it to music and flowers. Charles Lamb, however, knew nothing of music: he said he knew only two tunes; one was, "God save the King," and the other wasn't. Once, at a musical party at Leigh Hunt's, being oppressed with what was to him no better than a prolonged noise, he said "If one only had a pot of porter, I think one might get through this." The pot was procured, and Lamb weathered the storm.

Euler's delight in his old age, after he had lost his sight, was in the cheerful society of his grandchildren, and his chief relaxation from his severe studies was in teaching them the beginnings of learning. Dr. Robison, like Euler, took great pleasure in the society of his little grandson. "I am infinitely delighted," he wrote to James Watt, "with observing the growth of its little soul, and particularly with the numberless instincts which formerly passed unheeded. I thank the French theorists for more forcibly directing my attention to the finger of God which I discern in every

innocent ankle and blameless instep are tortured for the vices of the nobler organs. The stomach, having found this easy way of getting rid of inconveniences, becomes cruelly despotic, and punishes for the least offence. A plum, a glass of champagne, excess in joy, excess in grief, —any crime, however small,—is sufficient for redness, swelling, spasms, and large shoes."—*Life and Letters*, ii. 433.

awkward movement and every wayward whim. They are all guardians of his life, and growth, and power. I regret that I had not time to make infancy, and the development of its powers, my sole study." Two years later, Dr. Robison was taken away from his little playfellow.

Dr. Black, the venerable Professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh, a gentle and beautiful spirit, waited patiently for the last stroke of his pulse. At his death, he was sitting in his chair, and passed from life so quietly and peacefully as to leave a cup of milk and water lying unspilled upon his knee. He gave over living at seventy-one. Yet he did not die: he was merely promoted into eternal life.

Equally tranquil was the departure of Dr. Henry, the historian, at the age of seventy-two. He was living in the neighbourhood of Stirling, when he wrote to his young friend Sir Harry Moncreiff, at Edinburgh, and asked him to come out directly. "I have got something to do this week," he said, "I have got to die." Sir Harry went out at once, and found Dr. Henry sinking. Yet he sat up in his chair, conversed, and dozed. One day, he was roused by the clatter of a horse's hoofs in the court below. "Who is that?" asked the invalid. Mrs. Henry looked out, and said, "It's that wearisome body." It was a neighbouring minister, famous for never leaving the house of a dying person when he once got into it. "Keep him out," said the doctor, "don't let the cratur in here!" But "the cratur" was already at the back of the door, and entered the room. The doctor had time to wink at his wife, and pretended to be fast asleep. Sir Harry and Mrs. Henry pointed to the sleeping man, and put their fingers to their lips. The "cratur" sat down, and waited long; he tried to speak, but was forbidden by gesture. At last he was waved out of the room. When the clatter of his horse's hoofs were heard in

the court below, and died off in the distance, the doctor had a hearty laugh. He died that night.

Some men have even aspired after further improvement to the very close of their life. Nicholas Poussin, the artist, said, "As I grow old, I feel myself more and more inflamed with the desire of surpassing myself, and of reaching the highest perfection." In like manner, Gainsborough, after fifty years' application to painting, said, "I am just *beginning* to do something, and my life is going." On his deathbed he said, "We are all going to Heaven, and Vandyke is of the party."[1] Wren's delight in his old age, was in being carried once a year to see his great work, St. Paul's Cathedral.

During his last years, Cervantes was thrown into gaol in Madrid, and while there wrote *Don Quixote.* Towards the end he was very poor, and had not even the aid of paper. He had recourse to little scraps of leather, on which he scrawled his thoughts. When a Spanish Don was urged to help him, he replied, "Heaven forbid that his necessities should be relieved; it is his poverty that makes the world rich." As if hunger were the true nurse of genius! Cervantes eventually died of dropsy. During the progress of the disease, he prepared for the press his last work, *Persiles y Sigismunda.*

But perhaps the death of Peter Bayle (of the Dictionary) was the most thoroughly literary one on record. He woke up one morning, inspected a "proof" while his housekeeper lighted the fire to boil the coffee, but when the housekeeper looked round, her clear-eyed master was dead. Death had inspected his "proofs," and blotted Peter out. Dugald Stewart, during the last days of his life, corrected the proofs of the last complete edition of his works. The last recorded

[1] Wm. Jackson, *The Four Ages.*

intellectual act of Sir William Thomson, of Edinburgh, was in correcting the proofs of an article on the poet Heine. Shortly after, he died, his last words being, "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

Sir Richard Steele passed the evening of his life in a very pleasant manner. He had retired from public life in London, with shaken health and impaired fortunes, and went to reside at Llangunnor, near Caermarthen. There he spent the last few years of his life amidst the murmur of water, the whisper of breezes, and the singing of birds, still enjoying any new sense of pleasure. One of his biographers says of him, "I was told that he retained his cheerful sweetness of temper to the last, and would often be carried out of a summer evening, when the country lads and lasses were assembled at their rural sports, and with a pencil give an order on his agent, the mercer, for a new gown to the best dancer."

Adam Smith, in the evening of his life, found great delight in perusing the tragedies of Euripides and Racine. He had a fine library, and considered himself a beau only in his books. One of his principal desires, as he lay on his deathbed, was, that eighteen folio volumes of his speculations should be destroyed. It was a fine trait of Miss Inchbald, that she twice refused £1000 for the Memoirs of her Life, containing four volumes in all. Though straitened in means, she would not barter her talents for money. Thinking that the publication of the work might cause pain and suffering to some, she committed it to the flames before her death. This was noble, compared with the conduct of others, who leave to the world a bequest of venom—outraging friendship, confidence, and even decency. Dr. Johnson spoke with great contempt of an author who loaded a blunderbuss against religion and morality; but had not

the courage to fire it off himself, but left it to a publisher to draw the trigger after his death.

Archbishop Tillotson had a shelf full of books in his library, all richly bound and gilt. "What are these favourite authors?" asked a friend. "These," replied the Archbishop, "are my own personal friends; and what is more, I have made them such, for they were avowedly my enemies; from them I have received more profit than from the advice of my most cordial friends." After the death of Tillotson, a bundle of papers was found, on which he had written, "These are libels; I pray God to forgive the authors, as I do." He only knows how to conquer who knows how to forgive.

It need not be matter of wonder that men afflicted by disease should desire the cessation of life. The pain and incapacity for work, the gradual cessation of hopes and diminution of enjoyment, the advance of age, and the knowledge that the end cannot possibly be evaded, enable such men to welcome the termination of life, as the best earthly release. William Hutton says, in his autobiography, "The nearer the grave, the less the terror; health is the time to dread death, not sickness. Then the world has lost every charm, and futurity every fear."

When a man is young, and is still pressing on towards the accomplishment of his life's effort, it is hard to die. He hopes for the best, is encouraged by his friends, and tries to live. When David Scott, the Scotch Royal Academician, was struggling upwards in his art, he was seized with a fatal illness. His brother encouraged him with the hopes of recovery. "No," said Scott, "it cannot be—it seems too great a prize, too awfully grand a thing to enjoy life and health again, with this experience overcome, to have been ill, to have seen into the darkness, and return to the clearness of life. It takes a long time to know how to live and

work." It was too late. Scott did not recover, but died at forty-three. Grilparzer, in his tragedy of *Sappho*, says :—

> "To live is still the loftiest aim of life,
> And art, poor art, must be constrained for ever
> To be a beggar for life's overthrow."

It is different with the old. Their work is done, their race is run, and life is no more a joy, but a burden. The Abbé St. Pierre, when he spoke of dying, said he felt as if he were about to take a walk in the country. Baxter said of dying, that it was like taking leave of a troublesome companion—like parting with a shoe that pinched. Dr. Gartshorn took a practical view. When he retired from business and had nothing to do, he became hipped, then ill, and then was told that he was dying. "I'm glad of it," he said; "I'm tired of having my shoes pulled on and off." Nicholas Sogol, one of the most distinguished of Russian authors, said, just before breathing his last, "Ah! if people knew how pleasant it is to die, they would not fear death!"

Poor Charles Lamb and Thomas Hood must have often longed to get rid of life. And yet both were full of wit and humour. Lamb's humour seems to have proceeded from a keen—an almost torturing yet loving—perception of the contrast between the petty issues of life and the dread marvel of its mystery. His jesting was often like that of Hamlet with the skull of Yorick. He was the subject of much personal suffering. In 1833 he wrote, "Cough and cramp have become my bedfellows: we sleep three in a bed." "Some persons," he said, "do not object to sick people; I candidly confess that I hate them." The *otiosa eternitas* of his later life, as his friend Proctor expresses it, lapsed into the great deep beyond, on the 27th of December 1839, when he was in his fifty-ninth year.

The same may be said of Thomas Hood. His laughter

came from a suffering soul. His genial labours were the escape of his mind from ill-health and painful experience into a happier world, to redress the balance of this. Nearly all his short life was spent in attempting to escape from death; because he had others to provide for besides himself. As he himself described his case:

> "I'm sick of gruel, and the dietetics;
> I'm sick of pills, and sicker of emetics;
> I'm sick of pulses' tardiness or quickness;
> I'm sick of blood, its thinness or its thickness;—
> In short, within a word, I'm sick of sickness."

At last his life-long disease came to an end when he had completed his forty-sixth year. He could not have lamented the end of so suffering an existence. It might be said of him what Sir William Temple said of the life of man: "When all is done, human life is, at the greatest and best, but like a froward child, that must be played with and humoured a little until it falls asleep; and then the care is over."

After all, death is not very much feared. Men offer their lives on the battlefield, as the old gladiators did to give the Romans pleasure. Men risk their lives on the hunting-field, or at sea with only a plank between them and death. "There is no passion in the mind of man so weak," said Lord Bacon, "but it mates and masters the fear of death. . . . It is as natural to die as to be born. He that dies in an earnest pursuit is like one that is wounded in hot blood, who, for the time, scarce feels the hurt; and therefore a mind fixt and bent upon somewhat that is good, doth avert the dolors of death; but above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is *Nunc Dimittis*, when a man has obtained worthy ends and expectations. Death hath this also: that it openeth the Gate to good Fame, and extinguisheth Envy."

The late Sir Benjamin Brodie, who had much know-

ledge of life and death, said that in the course of his vast experience he had never observed indications of the fear of death, except twice. In both these cases, the patient was suffering from hæmorrhage, which it was impossible to suppress. The gradual loss of blood produced a depression which it was painful to witness, and led Sir Benjamin to the reflection that when Seneca bled himself to death he made the most miserable ending he could possibly have selected.

Nature has only ordered one door into life, but a hundred ways out of it. She gives us our being, and gives us the custody of the keys of life. Accidents, however, interfere, and take their custody out of our power. Thus Æschylus, the Greek poet, is said to have been killed by an eagle letting a tortoise fall upon his head to break it, mistaking his bald pate for a stone. The Lacedemonian youth, who resembled the great Hector, was crushed to death by the multitude who rushed to see him on hearing of the resemblance.

A grape pip silenced the songs of Anacreon. William the Conqueror died of a hot cinder. William the Third was sent from this life into the next by his horse stumbling over a mole-hill. Sir Robert Peel was brought to his death by an uneven paving-stone. Lavater was killed by a gunshot wound at Zurich, while carrying relief to the wounded. Molière was carried off the stage, a dying man, after performing in his own *Malade Imaginaire*. Andrew Marvell died while attending a meeting of his constituents at Hull. Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, after passing unscathed through many perils, was killed by falling downstairs in his house at Kinnaird, in Stirlingshire, while courteously seeing a lady visitor to her carriage. Captain Speke, the traveller, who discovered the sources of the Nile, and braved a thousand perils, was accidentally shot by his own gun while passing over a stile in Devonshire, and bled to death under

a stone wall. A valiant commander, who had been three times round the world, was drowned while crossing the ferry between the Isle of Dogs and Greenwich. Captain Harrison, who first commanded the *Great Eastern*, and had braved the storms of the Atlantic for many years, was drowned while going from his ship to the shore in a little cock-boat in Southampton Water. Von Ense, the soldier and author, who won an ensigncy on the bloody field of Wagram, and fought under Napoleon during the Continental wars, escaping many perils of life and limb, died while playing a game of chess with his little niece, falling back in his arm-chair, and exclaiming "J'ai perdu."

Cremalius Cordius died of starvation. Otway is said to have been choked by a piece of bread, which he devoured in the rage of hunger. Savage died in prison. The two illustrious De Witts were murdered by their political enemies. Kotzebue was assassinated. Condorcet, proscribed by the Girondins, poisoned himself to avoid being arrested. Lavoisier was condemned to die by the guillotine: his great services to science could not save him; "the republic," it was said, "has no need of philosophers." Petrarch was appropriately found dead in his library, with his head resting on an open book. Tasso was carried off by fever on the day appointed for his coronation in the Capitol at Rome; and he was buried the same evening in the Church of St. Onofrio.

Some men, supposed to be dead, have been too early interred, in early and even in modern times. Winslow, the Danish physician, who lived to the age of ninety-one, was twice on the point of being buried alive, while in a state of apparent death. The circumstance led him to write his well-known work, *On the Signs of Certain and Uncertain Death*, which was translated into French. Some years ago a petition was presented to the French Senate, praying for

an alteration in the laws affecting the burial of the dead. Only twenty-four hours then intervened between death and interment. His eminence, Cardinal Donnet, in supporting the petition, mentioned the case of a young priest who had fainted while in the act of preaching. In fact it was himself, and he was about to be buried when he was rescued by the devotion of a friend.[1] This discussion influenced the famous Meyerbeer, who was haunted by the dread of being buried before life was extinct; and he left careful provisions in order to prevent such a catastrophe.

Edmund Smith, the poet, died from swallowing medicine of his own prescription. Machiavelli also died from the effects of medicine. Voltaire died from taking too strong a dose of opium. Edgar Allan Poe was picked up in the street intoxicated, and was carried to an hospital where he died, at thirty-eight. The death of Sterne was equally melancholy. Though he used to boast of troops of friends,

[1] The debate in the French Senate took place in February 1866. The experience of Cardinal Donnet was most extraordinary, and it made a great impression on the house, as well as on the public. The following is the summary of his statement: "In the year 1826, at the close of a sultry summer afternoon, a young priest fainted while in the act of preaching. Hours elapsed—he gave no sign of life. The village doctor pronounced him dead, inquired his age, place of birth, and signed the burial license. The bishop in whose cathedral the young curé had been performing the service, arrived and recited the De Profundis. The coffin-maker measured the body. In the dead of night a young friend, hearing of the event, arrived to take a last farewell; the sound of the familiar voice acted as an electric shock on the supposed corpse, and a superhuman effort of nature was the result. The following day, the young priest was again in his pulpit, and, gentlemen, *he is now in the midst of you*—(sensation)—and forty years subsequent to this experience he implores of you not only to recommend that increased precautions be taken to see that the law as it stands be carried out, but that new preventive measures be decreed to prevent irreparable misfortunes." The result of the extraordinary debate was that the length of time between death and burial was considerably increased.

he eventually sank into poverty, and died in a mean lodging-house. He was followed to the parish burying-ground at Tyburn by hired mourners; the grave was marked by the resurrectionists; the body was taken up and sold to Professor Collignon of Cambridge, for dissection by his students. Alas! poor Yorick. Yet Jeremy Bentham left his body for dissection for the benefit of science; and it was pleasant to see his smiling face, in the dress in which he lived, at the house of his friend, Dr. Southwood Smith.

Caravaggio and Titian were shamefully treated by assassins and robbers. Polidoro da Caravaggio had amassed a considerable sum of money at Messina, and prepared to return to Rome; but before he departed, some assassins, at the instigation of his servant, were admitted to the house, and stabbed him to death while he slept. Titian was struck by the plague at Venice at the age of ninety-nine; as he could not defend himself, he was plundered by his attendants and left to die. It was not so with Leonardo da Vinci. He entered the service of Francis I. of France, and had chambers at his palace of Fontainebleau. One day, when Francis happened to visit Leonardo in his chamber, the latter was seized with a violent paroxysm of heart disease, and the painter died in the king's arms.

A strange funereal longing characterised nearly every member of the Austrian house of Spain. They anticipated the grave, and seemed to long for death. Charles V. was present, after his abdication, at the celebration of his own funeral rites. His son, Philip II., placed his crown upon a skull shortly before he died. He was a most cruel and unhappy man—the persecutor of the Netherlanders, and the originator of the Sacred Armada. He was never known to laugh, except when he heard of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, when more than five thousand Parisians

of all ranks were murdered in the streets of Paris. It is said that he eventually died of *morbus pediculosus.*

Philip IV. of Spain laid himself down in the niche destined for his own reception in the Pantheon. Charles IV. descended into the mausoleum in which the dead kings of Spain lay, opened their coffins, looked at their fleshless faces and ceremented corpses, which crumbled into dust as soon as touched. "Surely," says a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, "this visit of the last descendant of the house of Austria to the Pantheon of the Escurial—the corpse-like king stealing among the collected corpses of his race—is one of the strangest things in history."[1]

Some men have gloried in dying in the moment of victory. Muley Moluc rose from his death-bed to fight a battle, and when he had won it he suddenly died. Drake was committed to the deep in sight of Portobello, which he had stormed and taken. "The waves became his winding sheet, and the waters were his tomb." When the gallant Sir Humphrey Gilbert went down with his ship, he said, "The road to heaven is as short by sea as by land." Admiral Blake died within sight of England, when returning from victory. Nelson died on the scene of his most famous sea-fight—the bay of Trafalgar.

General Wolfe died on the heights of Quebec; the scene of his one great battle. When dying, an officer, looking towards the field, cried, "See! how they run!" 'Who run?" asked Wolfe eagerly, raising himself on his elbow. "The enemy!" was the answer. "Then God be praised; I die happy." The hero fell back, and at once expired. When Montcalm, the French general, was told that his wound was mortal, he replied: "So much the better! I shall not live to see the surrender of Quebec."

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, No. 263, p. 31.

Sir John Moore also died the death he always wished for—on a won field of battle, with the flying enemy before him. His expiring words were: "I hope the people of England will be satisfied, and that my country will do me justice."

Speyk, the Dutch commander, blew up his ship at Antwerp, to prevent it falling into the hands of the Belgians. The Dutch have commemorated his valour by pictures and statues. Lieutenant Willoughby, in the Indian Mutiny, blew up the great magazine at Delhi. He thus destroyed the ammunition that would have armed the rebellious Sepoys, and enabled them to hold the field against the British soldiers. In blowing up the magazine, Lieutenant Willoughby destroyed himself.

There are also the deaths following victories of another sort. Amongst these are the death of Howard, the philanthropist, at Cherson, after his war against vice, immorality, and the cruelties of prison life. When Hugh Latimer was about to be burnt at the stake, and was asked whether he would abjure his principles, his reply was: "I thank God most heartily that he hath prolonged my life to this end, that I may glorify God with this kind of death." William Wilberforce was on his deathbed when the news reached him of the bill abolishing slavery passing the House of Commons. "Thank God," he exclaimed, "that I have lived to see the day when England is willing to give twenty millions for the abolition of slavery."

Some men have lived through many battles. Though the Duke of Wellington was only once wounded, the Marquis de Segur was often wounded, almost to death. At the battle of Rocoux a musket-ball pierced his chest and was extracted from near the spine. At Lanfeld, his arm was shattered by a musket-ball and amputated. At Closteramp, he was pierced in the neck by a bayonet, and received three sabre

wounds in the head. While labouring under the gout, in 1790, he was arrested by the Convention, and imprisoned in La Force. Yet he lived till 1801, and died at seventy-eight.

Some have carried their love of science to the last extremity. Archimedes was killed by a soldier at the taking of Syracuse. He was tracing geometrical figures upon the sand, and the interest of the problem enabled him to forget the fear of death. Haller, when on his deathbed, followed the variations of his pulse. He said to his friend Dr. Rosselet: "Now the artery ceases to beat," and immediately expired. It was the same with Mr. Green, author of *The Spiritual Philosophy of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. When the surgeon entered his room, Mr. Green pointed to the region of his heart, and said significantly, "Congestion." With his finger on his wrist, he noted the feeble pulses which were between him and death. Presently he said, "Stopped," and died with the word on his lips.

Cuvier, when struck by paralysis, called the attention of the bystanders to his mouth twitched on one side, as a proof of Sir Charles Bell's theory of the nervous system: "Ce sont les nerfs de la volonté qui sont malades." M. Retzius died in the full pursuit of science. He made observations on the progressing dissolution of his own body: "Now the legs are dead; now the muscles of the bowels cease their functions; the last struggle must be heavy, but for all that, it is highly interesting." These were his last words.

Geology also, has had its martyrs. Pliny the elder fell a victim to the eagerness with which he examined the eruptions of Mount Vesuvius. In modern times, Professor Strickland of Oxford was killed while examining the geological structure of a railway cutting; and Dr. James Bryce, in his eager scientific ardour, was killed while exa-

mining the geological formation of the rocks near the Fall of Foyers in Scotland. Others have lost their lives in geographical explorations—Captain Cook in the Sandwich Islands; Mungo Park in Central Africa; Burke in Australia; Gardener in Columbia; and Sir John Franklin in the Arctic Regions.

Bacon fell a martyr to his love of experimental philosophy. He was desirous of ascertaining whether animal substances might not be prevented from putrefying by the application of snow or ice. One cold day, in the early spring of 1626, he alighted from his coach near Highgate to try the experiment. He bought a dead fowl and stuffed it with snow. While thus engaged he felt a sudden chill. It was the premonitor of his death. He was carried to the Earl of Arundel's house at Highgate, and died within a week. To the last he did not forget the fowl stuffed with snow. In the last letter which he wrote, he mentioned that the experiment of the snow had answered "excellently well."

The daughter of Diderot published a memoir of her father, in which she says that the evening before his death he conversed with his friends upon philosophy, and the various means of pursuing it. "The first step towards philosophy," he said, "is incredulity." This characteristic remark was the last which he made. Diderot had before approved of the last words of Sanderson, the mathematician: "Time, matter, and space, are perhaps but a point." Laplace's last words were: "Ce que nous conaissons est peu de chose; ce que nous ignorons est immense"; reminding one of Newton's words, that throughout his life he had been merely picking up shells along the great ocean of truth.

Mozart died with the score of the *Requiem* before him. As the last film gathered over his eyes, his trembling fingers pointed to one bar of music, and with his lips he

seemed trying to express a peculiar effect of kettle-drums, when he finally sank into his death-swoon. Rossini's last productive hours were occupied by the composition of the *Messe Solenelle*, which was played at his funeral; and Chopin died while Marcello's famous *Hymn to the Virgin*—which had before saved for a time the life of Stradella—was being performed in an adjoining room. It was his last request, and before it was finished the lethargy of death had stolen over him. Chopin's *Marche Funebre* was played at his own funeral.

When Lacépède, the naturalist, was seized by virulent smallpox, and felt himself dying, he said to his physician: "I go to rejoin Buffon." Hooker, on his deathbed, expressed his joy at the prospect of entering a World of Order. Dupuytren desired that a surgical paper which he had been preparing should be read to him the evening before he died, "in order," he said, "that he might carry the latest news of disease out of the world." Montaigne died whilst mass was being said at his bedside. Scarron, after a life of debauchery and dissipation—though an ecclesiastic and a canon—said, when dying: "I could not have supposed it so easy to make a joke of death." Like Scarron, Rabelais, though a priest, could not refrain from jesting when dying. After receiving extreme unction, a friend asked him how he felt, he replied: "Je suis prêt au grand voyage; on vient de me graisser les bottes." The dissipated Marshal Saxe's last words were: "Le rêve a été court, mais il a été beau." He died at fifty-four. Edward Coke died at eighty-two; his last words were: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done."

When Herder lay dying, he asked his son for a great thought that, when the darkness of death had gathered round him, he might feel that a greater life and light were there. But, for the most part, men are past thinking when

they are passing over the verge of life. Death resembles sleep. The interruption to the functions of respiration is the only apparent source of uneasiness to the dying, and even that is little felt. The breathing becomes slower and slower, and then it ceases altogether without pain. Sir Henry Halford said, that "of the great number to whom it had been his professional duty to have administered in the last hours of their lives, he had sometimes felt surprised that so few appeared reluctant to go to 'the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns.'" "I must sleep now," said Byron; and "Happy" was the last half-hushed ejaculation of Lyndhurst, who slumbered out of life.

In fact dying, when disease has done its work, is no more painful than falling asleep.

> "Like a clock worn out with eating Time,
> The wheels of weary life at last stand still."

Although the appearances upon the features of the departing sufferer may indicate anguish, relatives may be comforted with the assurance that when the changes begin which end in death, all pain is really at an end. Muscular spasms and convulsions are at that stage quite independent of feeling, and are mere unconscious acts. Death is the gentlest possible separation of life from matter; in many, if not in all cases, it is accompanied by the sensation described in the beautiful lines of Spenser—

> "Sleep after toil, port after stormy seas,
> Ease after war, death after life, doth greatly please."

At the moment of death, however, there is sometimes a momentary exaltation of the mind, in which it surveys the past with lightning glance, and exhibits the triumph of spirit over matter at the moment of their final separation. The mind flickers up like the last glimmer of a taper in its socket,

and the parting breath of the dying is often a striking commentary on the past life. Physiologists inform us that this preternatural exaltation of the mind at such a moment resembles dreaming more than any other known mental condition; yet the ideas passing in the mind seem to be suggested to some extent by external circumstances. As in the case of the death of a distinguished judge, who, seeing the mourning relatives standing round his bed, raised himself for a moment from his couch, and said with his wonted dignity, "Gentlemen of the jury, you will find——," then fell back on his pillow and expired.

Among the memorable last thoughts of great men is that of Goethe. He rises to go out and luxuriate in the young sun; the hand of death falls on him; he sinks back on the sofa, murmuring, "Dass mehr Licht hereinkomme," and passes away into another life. More light! The prayer of expiring genius resounds from world to world. At the close of Schiller's long illness, a friend inquired how he felt: "Calmer and calmer," was his reply. A little later he looked up and said, "Many things are growing clearer and clearer to me," and then the pure and noble spirit passed away. Keats, before he died, was asked how he felt: "Better, my friend; I feel the daisies growing over me!" The sun shone brilliantly into the room where Humboldt died, and it is said that the last words addressed to his niece were, "How grand these rays! they seem to beckon Earth to Heaven!" When Fichte's son approached him with medicine, in his last moments, he said, "Leave it alone; I need no more medicine; I feel that I am well." "It is time to go to rest," said Richter.

Among the ever-memorable words of great men spoken on their deathbeds, are those of Johnson, "Live well!" Sir Walter Scott said to his son-in-law, "Be virtuous, be

religious, be a good man; nothing else can give you any comfort when you come to lie here." When Sir Walter Raleigh's executioner told him to lie down at the block with his head to the east, he said, "No matter how the head lie, so that the heart be right."

Cicero says that Plato was actually engaged in writing at the moment of his death, at the age of eighty-two. Lucan died reciting verses from his *Pharsalia*. Roscommon uttered, at the moment he expired, two lines of his own version of *Dies iræ*. Herder closed his career writing an ode to the Deity, his pen on the last line. When Tycho Brache lay dying, he several times, during his deliriums, repeated, "Ne frustra vixisse videar," thus expressing the hope that he had not lived in vain. Abelard's last words, scarce heard, were "Je ne sais," as if in answer to the question propounded long before his time, "Que sais-je?" When Frederick II. of Denmark was approaching the moment of death, the doctor felt his pulse: "Let the pulse beat as it may," the king said, "we know the mercy of God will never fail." Isaac Watts, when asked how he felt, answered, "Waiting God's leave to die"; and in this peaceful state he expired at the age of seventy-four. The last words of Dr. Andrew Combe were, "Happy, happy!" Oehlenschläger, the Danish poet, when he felt himself dying, called upon his son to read a passage from his own tragedy of *Socrates*, in which the Greek sage speaks of the Immortality of the Soul. He expressed himself more than ever convinced on that subject, and, while so speaking, expired.

Among warriors and statesmen, many last thoughts have been remembered. The eloquence of Pericles was a grand characteristic of the man, but not the grandest: when dying, he affirmed that his greatest honour had been "that no Athenian, through his means, had ever put on mourning."

So, the last words of Frederick V. of Denmark were, "There is not a drop of blood on my hands." Napoleon, through whom hecatombs of men died in battle, had war in his mind to the end of his life: "Téte d'armée" were his last words. Nelson's, on the contrary, were, "I thank God I have done my duty." When Kosciusko fell, pierced by Russian lances, he exclaimed, "An end of Poland!" One of the grandest last thoughts was that of Gustavus Adolphus: "I am the King of Sweden, and I seal with my blood the liberty and religion of the whole German nation." The Emperor Rudolph said, when dying, "I am on my way to Spires to visit the kings, my predecessors."

Sir Philip Sidney's last act was as noble as his whole life. When lying wounded on the fatal field of Zutphen, he caught the eye of a dying soldier fixed on the water at which his own parched lips were placed, "Take it," said he, "thy need is greater than mine." There spoke the hero as well as the gentleman. Somewhat similar in character were the dying words of the hero of Corunna. When the surgeons hurried to his aid, Sir John Moore said, "You can be of no service to me; go to the soldiers to whom you can be useful: I am beyond your skill."

Mutual esteem and unbroken friendship existed between Outram and Havelock, the Indian heroes. When Sir James came to visit his dying comrade, Havelock with his last words exclaimed, "Outram, for more than forty years I have so ruled my life that when death should come I might meet it face to face without fear." Then, turning to his son, he said, "See, my son, how a Christian can die." A staff officer said to Lord Hardinge, after a victory achieved, "Havelock, my lord, is every inch a soldier." "Every inch a soldier!" said the veteran general. "Yes, Havelock is every inch a soldier; but he is more, and he is

better: he is every inch a Christian." The dying words of Sir Henry Lawrence will long be remembered, "Let there be no fuss about me: let me be buried with the men."

Among statesmen, a few last thoughts are memorable. Cardinal Wolsey was seized with sudden illness while proceeding on his last visit to London, and took refuge in the monastery at Leicester. Kyngston, Lieutenant of the Tower, went to visit him, perhaps to apprehend him. Wolsey said to him, when he felt himself dying, "If I had served God as diligently as I have served the king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs." When Robert Cecil, the great statesman, worn out with the cares of office, lay at the point of death, he said to Sir William Cope, "Ease and pleasure quake to hear of death; but my life, full of cares and miseries, desireth to be dissolved." "Will not all my riches save me?" exclaimed Cardinal Beaufort: "what! Is there no bribing death?" Queen Elizabeth's last words were, "All my possessions for a moment of time!" How different from the parting words of Washington: "It is well!" Pitt's last words, uttered about half an hour before his death, were, "Oh, my country: how I love my country!"

Turner, the artist, was so much grieved at the want of public encouragement, that he ordered one of his greatest pictures to be used as his winding sheet. Sir Francis Chantrey rallied him out of his intention: "Well, my boy, if you *will* be buried in that picture, depend upon it we will most certainly have you up again next morning." The picture was the famous one of Carthage, now hung in the National Gallery. Bacon, the sculptor, was buried in Whitfields Chapel, Tottenham Court Road, and the following inscription was placed, by his own direction, on the tablet over his grave: "What I was as an artist, seemed to me of some importance while I lived; but what I really

was as a believer in Jesus Christ is the only thing of importance to me now."

If it be true, as Dr. Fletcher believed, that at the moment of dying, the mind is occasionally in so exalted a state that an almost instantaneous survey is taken of the whole of the past life, we can understand the horrors that haunted the mind of Charles XIV. of France on his deathbed, who fancied that he still heard the groans of his subjects, who were massacred by his orders on the day of St. Bartholomew. But Louis XIV. was more to blame, so far as the prosperity of France was concerned, for his persecution of the Huguenots in the following century. They were persecuted, hanged, sent to the gallows, or banished. They were driven forth into all lands—into Germany, Switzerland, Holland, England, Florida, New England, the Cape of Good Hope. They died far apart—brothers and sisters with half the world between them; but all to be re-united at the last day. Louis XIV., though fraudulently termed "the Great," was tormented in his last moments by the recollection of his fearful deeds.

The end of the American President was more peaceful. Adams and Jefferson both died on the 4th of July 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The day broke with the ringing of bells and the firing of guns, and the din woke up the dying John Adams. He was asked if he knew what it meant. After a moment, he said, "Oh yes! It is the glorious 4th of July. God bless it! God bless you all." Then after a while, "It is a great and glorious day." After a pause—"Jefferson still survives?" At noon, his last illness came, and he fell asleep at six P.M. Jefferson died at one o'clock on the same day, his last words being, "I resign my soul to God, and my daughter to my country." The two old rivals and

friends went forth to meet their Maker together. James Monroe, like Adams and Jefferson, died on the 4th of July. It is said that Webster, before dying, was lying in a half dreamy state, when he suddenly broke forth in a voice loud, clear, and thrilling, like a trumpet blast, "Life, life! Death, death! how curious it is!" He shortly after expired.

We conclude with the words of Charles Fitz-Geoffry, the poet and preacher, who when speaking on the death of Mrs. Pym, the statesman's mother, in 1620, used these quaint but memorable words:—

"Man is, as it were, a book; his birth is the title-page; his baptism, the epistle dedicatory; his groans and crying, the epistle to the reader; his infancy and childhood, the argument and contents of the whole ensuing treatise; his life and actions, the subject; his crimes and errors, the faults escaped; his repentance, the correction. Now there are some large volumes in folio; some little ones in sixteenmo; some are fayrer bound, some playner; some in strong vellum, some in thin paper; some whose subject is piety and godliness, some (and too many such) pamphlets of wantonness and folly; but in the last page of every one, there stands a word which is *finis*, and this is the last word in every book. *Such* is the life of man: some longer, some shorter, some stronger, some weaker, some fairer, some coarser, some holy, some profane; but death comes in *finis* at the last, to close up the whole; for that is the end of all men."

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PRINTED AT THE EDINBURGH PRESS, 9 AND 11 YOUNG STREET.